



Open Space and Recreation Plan

Mendon, Massachusetts

2013-2020



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Section 1 – Plan Summary

The Mendon 2013-20 Open Space and Recreation Plan is designed to serve as a comprehensive guide to plan Mendon’s future in terms of preserving critical parcels of land for resource protection and passive recreation enjoyment, balanced with providing active recreational facilities to meet the needs of Mendon’s growing population. The plan reflects the vision of Mendon’s residents, the expertise of the town boards and the analysis of the data collected.

The Town of Mendon has preserved several parcels of key open space, organized effective open space management and improved active recreation facilities. Since Mendon passed the Community Preservation Act in 2002, Mendon has been able to apply for matching grants, which has greatly improved the success of these projects. It has also encouraged a surge in volunteerism. Since the last plan, the Mendon Park Commissioners have put forth an effective concerted effort to improve the active recreational facilities. Mendon has also developed a network of people and organizations, in Mendon and regionally, working together to meet Mendon’s open space needs. The Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) has served as an overall guide for Mendon’s projects, encouraging an overall coordinated series of projects that have added great value to the quality of life in Mendon. The overall goals for this plan are as follows:

1. To protect critical parcels of land for conservation and passive recreation
2. To provide active recreation areas to meet the needs of Mendon’s growing population
3. To access funding and land protection strategies to protect or purchase land for open space or recreation
4. To maintain recreational and passive recreation properties the town owns
5. To protect the town’s water resources (wetlands, ponds, aquifers etc.)
6. To provide support to farmers who want to keep their land in agriculture and maintain productive farms
7. To help guide business and residential development to shape Mendon’s growth, avoiding haphazard development
8. To provide cemetery space for future needs
9. To assist in the acquisition of land for the Town of Mendon’s needs
10. To work toward the goal of 10% affordable housing units for the Town of Mendon

Section 2 – Introduction

A. Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this OSRP plan is to update the needs and goals for Mendon, in terms of open space and recreation and to articulate how Mendon hopes to accomplish meeting these goals. This OSRP will and has served as a framework and reference to guide the Town of Mendon towards achieving the goals set forth in this OSRP plan.

This is the sixth OSRP for Mendon. The major reason that this plan was developed is because of the intense pressure for residential development in Mendon, which affects both the recreational facilities and the open space. Factors putting pressure on Mendon include; first, the towns around Mendon are reaching build out capacity and the new growth is rapidly moving to Mendon. Second, the connection of Route 146 and the Massachusetts Turnpike has made commuting from Mendon easier. Third, with the increase of new young families in town, Mendon needs to build recreational facilities to meet the needs of the growing population. Fourth, Mendon has retained much of its rural character making it an attractive town in which to live and the residents would like to continue on this path.

Mendon still has a good portion of land that is open space. Although the Town has worked to preserve land, most of the open space is not permanently protected. This plan will be a foundation to guide Mendon's growth, avoiding unplanned development.

The Town of Mendon has accomplished many of the ongoing objectives set forth in the previous OSRP, but there is still more to do. The accomplishments follow.

- In 2001, the Town of Mendon purchased land from three separate landowners. The first piece was the 150-acre Wood property, the second was the 96-acre Kelly Farm and the third was the 14-acre Paddock property. These three land purchases helped to complete an 800-acre tract of contiguous, protected open space, which straddles the Towns of Mendon and Blackstone. These purchases were done with collaboration between, the MA. Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, the Metacomet Land Trust, the Mendon Land Use Committee, other town boards and a private donor. Most of this open space is BioMap2 Core Habitat, as well as Critical Natural Landscape. This area is called the Inman Wildlife Conservation Area.
- In 1999-2000, a summer day camp program was started at the Memorial Field and Town Beach Area.
- In 2001, John Gannett donated 29+ acres to the Town to be used as open space or open space and a library. This land has Muddy Brook running through it and abuts hundreds of acres of open space. It has a high potential for trails and outdoor environmental education programs. Part of this open space is BioMap2 Core Habitat, as well as Critical Natural Landscape.
- In 2001, the Town passed a *Rate of Development* Bylaw, which allowed only 39 new building permits for residential units to be issued each year through 2006, in order for the Town of Mendon to promote orderly growth.
- In 2002, after much education and community outreach, the Mendon voters passed the Community Preservation Act. Voters approved a surcharge on real property at 3% of the annual real estate tax levy against real property; with an exemption from such surcharge of \$100,000 of the value of each taxable parcel of residential real property.
- In 2002, a soccer field was created on Town-owned land. Grover Field is constantly in use during the spring and fall soccer seasons.
- In 2002, 50 acres of open fields on the Town-owned Kelly Farm was leased to a Mendon dairy farmer to reseed and hay the fields. This was done to maintain the open fields and

forest edges to encourage a diversity of plants and wildlife, at no cost to the Town. It was also done to support the survival of one of the last working farms in Mendon.

- In 2003, a handicapped accessible bathroom was built for Memorial Field.
- In 2003, the Land Use Committee worked with MassGIS to update the mapping data on Mendon. A CD was developed specifically for Mendon where parcel lines were included which could be layered with other important data, such as the Mass BioMap. This has been very helpful in identifying who owned the environmentally sensitive land in Mendon and therefore, where the Town needed to target land protection efforts.
- In 2003, a mobile classroom was moved to Memorial Field to be used for the recreation program.
- In 2004, the Planning Board coordinated the compilation of the Community Development Plan for Mendon. This included compiling a profile for Mendon, defining its strengths and weaknesses and developing an action plan. This report compliments the OSRP.
- In 2005, the Town purchased the 78-acre Fino property of which 24 acres of the land was preserved as open space and paid for with CPA funds. The open space contains BioMap2 Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscape. The rest of the land is planned for commercial development, potential municipal use, affordable housing and standard housing all designed to fit with Mendon's rural character. This development hopes to generate funds to pay off the debt incurred from buying the property.
- In 2005, forest stewardship plans were developed for the Town-owned properties. Boy Scout Troop 44 camped several times on the Town-owned Kelly Farm property and worked with the forester to blaze the borders of the property and perform wildlife cutting of trees to create nesting sites for birds and mammals.
- In 2005, in conjunction with the Bay State Trail Riders Association, a loop trail was cleared from old cart paths, with available parking for horse trailers. Chris Mehrmann built picnic tables, fixed a stonewall at the entrance to the parking area and made a kiosk with maps of the trails at the trailhead for his Eagle Scout project.
- In 2005, "My One Wish Foundation" built a handicapped playground. An appropriate surface for wheelchairs needs to be put in for the floor of the playground to complete the project.
- In 2005, eight new Scenic Roads were added to Mendon's Scenic Road Bylaw. This makes a total of 15 Scenic roads in Mendon. Designating these roads will help preserve the historic trees and stone walls along these roads, as well as protect roadside scenic vistas. See the Map 5 - Unique Features Map to see where the roads are located.
- In 2005, Charles Allaire donated 15+ acres that abuts hundreds of acres of open space. The open space contains BioMap2 Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscape.
- In 2006-7, Mendon participated in the MA Heritage Landscape Inventory Program and developed a Mendon Reconnaissance Report working with the state consultants to designate areas of critical concern for open space and historical preservation, developing a plan and "toolkit" of ideas to accomplish goals.

- In 2006-7, using mostly volunteer efforts, private donations and an Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Grant, the Founders' Park Preservation and Enhancement Project was launched to restore a historically significant park in the center of Mendon.
- In 2007, using CPA funds, a new all-purpose field and two baseball/softball fields were constructed. Fencing. A path around the field was also installed.
- In 2008-9, the Town of Mendon, using CPA funds and a MA LAND Grant, purchased the 60-acre former Chaleki property. The property is wooded, has excellent wildlife habitat, and includes the 9-acre Inman Pond and two streams. A conservation restriction on the property is held by the Trustees of Reservations. The open space contains BioMap2 Critical Natural Landscape. This area is now named Meadow Brook Woods.
- In 2008, Mendon passed an Open Space Communities bylaw that allows developers to build the same number of houses as a conventional subdivision closer together, however a minimum of 55% of the property needs to be set aside as permanently protected open space. This is a good method to prevent sprawl and protect open space without having to use town funds.
- In 2010-13, there was an effort to remove the invasive non-native water chestnut weeds that had infested the 9-acre Inman Pond on Meadow Brook Woods. CPA funds and TTOR funds were used to have Lycott Environmental mechanically remove literally tons of the weeds. They also handpicked the weeds along the edges. The town has organized volunteer handpicking to keep the weeds from re-infestation.
- In 2010, volunteers from the Mendon Boy Scouts renovated a cabin on the Meadow Brook Woods property. It will be used for camping. CPA funds were used for this project.
- In 2010, a private donation was used to renovate the house at the Mendon Town Beach where some of the camp activities are held. ADA compliant restrooms were built.
- In 2010, Mark Reil organized a Meadow Brook Woods Association of volunteers for his senior high school project.
- In 2010, Gregg LaPlante cleared a trail onto Meadow Brook Woods to the cabin and marked the property boundaries with signs for his Eagle Scout Project.
- In 2011, Zach Gaskill cleared a trail and terraced steps from the cabin down a steep hill to the Inman Pond on the Meadow Brook Woods property for his Eagle Scout project.
- In 2011, AJ Bottoms cleared a trail by the Inman Pond to Meadow Brook on the Meadow Brook Woods property for his Eagle Scout project.
- In 2011, Hunter Peterson designed an orienteering course in Meadow Brook Woods, with all the information online, except for small markers on trees (to indicate the points that need to be located) for his Eagle Scout project.
- In 2011, Mike Biancucci built a fire pit and seating at the Meadow Brook Woods property for his Eagle Scout project.

- In 2011, the Land Use Committee helped to set up an Agricultural Commission.
- In 2011, Mendon became a Green Community. The free Big Belly solar compacter and recycling bin were put at the town beach.
- In 2011, the former 27-acre Paddock property was purchased with CPA funds through a bargain sale. This land abuts other town-owned open space, Muddy Brook runs through the property (home to the threatened American Brook Lamprey) and it is a valuable wildlife habitat. The Metacomet Land Trust will hold a conservation restriction on the property. The open space contains BioMap2 Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscape.
- In 2011, the former 27-acre Nolet property was purchased using CPA funds, a donation and a Conservation Partnership Grant awarded to the Trustees of Reservations. The open space contains BioMap2 Critical Natural Landscape. This parcel was a keystone property, because it connected the 60-acre Meadow Brook Woods property to the 175-acre Trustees of Reservations Cormier Woods Farmstead property. The town owns 16 acres that was added to the Meadow Brook Woods property and TTOR kept 11 acres and added it to the Cormier Woods property.
- In 2011, an effort was made to reduce the off-highway vehicles (OHV) on the Inman Hill Wildlife Conservation Area. The environmental police and local police were contacted. A meeting was held with abutters to the conservation area to inform them of their rights with regards to OHV. An article was written in the local paper. New signs were put up to indicate that that OHV were not permitted. The neighbors were empowered and educated. The effort helped to reduce the OHV on the property.
- In 2012, using CPA funds, a part-time Affordable Housing Coordinator was hired to help meet the needs of affordable housing in Mendon.
- In 2012, CPA funds were used to hire an American with Disabilities (ADA) consultant to audit the accessibility to the recreational areas. The plan is to use CPA funds to make the needed changes to these areas to make them (ADA) compliant.
- In 2012, CPA funds were used to replace the current town playground. To supplement the CPA funds, the project was done as a volunteer community-build.
- In 2012, a Right to Farm bylaw was passed.
- In 2012, the Select Board appointed the Mendon Town Forest Committee. This group is working to identify historical sites and trails in the Town Forest. The trails on this property will link to the trails on the Meadow Brook Woods property, with plans to link with the Southwick Zoo property and to open space that leads to Lake Nipmuc.
- In 2012, with the Trustees of Reservations Cormier Wood's caretakers, the Mendon Land Use Committee helped start the Uxbridge Preservation group. The idea was to encourage Mendon's Uxbridge neighbors to become more involved in land preservation, since valuable open space in Mendon flows into Uxbridge. Through several ongoing meetings there has been much success in generating interest and partnerships on projects; one being to encourage Uxbridge to submit an Open Space and Recreation Plan.

- In 2013, the Cobbler's Knoll Development donated to the town an additional 3.6 acres of open space on Puffer Drive that abutted the Paddock open space.
- In 2013, the Mendon Green Alliance Facebook page was created to reach out to more people concerned with environmental issues.
- In 2013, using CPA funds, a Beaver Control Device was installed to prevent the Inman Pond from flooding, but allow the beavers to live in the pond without having to trap them.
- In 2013, the former Cox property was approved for an Open Space Communities subdivision. The plan is to have the Conservation Commission manage the property and Metacomet Land Trust hold the conservation restriction on the 24 acres of open space.
- In 2013, used CPA funds to purchase a surveillance system for the playground and Memorial Field area to protect the park, which had been vandalized.
- In 2013, voters passed a bylaw delineating general business districts, highway business districts, rural residential districts and general residential districts to encourage focused well-planned areas for the development of commercial businesses, while protecting the rural character of the town and avoiding haphazard development.
- 2013, 14 acres at 188 Providence St. had a conservation restriction placed on the property. Metacomet Land Trust holds the restriction. This property contains BioMap 2 Core Habitat.
- An ongoing effort is Mendon having a representative on the Metacomet Land Trust Board of Directors to keep a pulse and involvement in regional land preservation projects.
- In 2013, Kevin Rudden used CPA funds to evaluate the ADA access to open space and recreational facilities. CPA funds will be used to make these improvements to these areas following the consultant's recommendations. Currently in process is making the Memorial Fields and playground ADA accessible.
- In 2013, a Septic Management Program was established where the state provides low cost loans to Mendon residents who pay the loan back through their tax bills. The benefit of this is that residents will be more likely to replace failing septic systems that can have detrimental impacts on wetlands.
- 2013, 97 acres off of Lake Nipmuc was preserved with a \$315, 630 LAND Grant and \$264,370 of CPA funds.
- In 2014, Parker Grant and Shawn Clifton will work with Becky Kalagher, President of the Bay State Trail Riders Association to build a bridge over Meadow Brook to continue the trail on the Meadow Brook Woods property, so that it eventually will connect with the Trustees of Reservations Cormier Woods property and beyond.

- In 2014, Erik Kahler has started helping to map out the trail systems in town and make the maps available in electronic and paper formats. He is working with the Trustees of Reservations and the Bay State Trail Riders Association.

B. Planning Process and Public Participation

Mendon specifically chose *not* to use a consultant to pull together the OSRP, even though the process has been very rigorous and time consuming for volunteers. One reason was to save the town money. However, the more important reason is that when Mendon residents pull the plan together they understand the process, and learn about the resources and needs of the town. When the goals, objectives and action plans are set, the end product is realistic and meets the town's specific needs and therefore gets followed, instead of being an OSRP that collects dust on a shelf. It is a working guide for the town that is used.

The primary data collectors and writers of the 2013-20 Mendon Open Space And Recreation Plan: **Mendon Land Use Committee**: Barry Iadarola, Peter Coffin, Lawney Tinio, Anne Mazar and Sharon Cutler. Other committees and people include the **Park Commissioners**: Sue Barnett, Mark Reil and Joe Flaherty. **Community Preservation Committee**: Barry Iadarola, Bill Aten, Mike Goddard, Anne Mazar, Wayne Wagner, Peter Denton and Sue Barnett. **Select Board**: Lawney Tinio, Mike Goddard and Mark Reil. **Conservation Commission**: Damon Tinio, Tim Aicardi, Peter Coffin, Mike Ammendolia and Bill Aten. **Planning Board**: Bill Ambrosino, Damon Tinio, James Quirk, Barry Iadarola and John VanderSluis. **Master Plan Committee**: Shirley Smith, Bill Ambrosino, Peter Coffin, Bill McHenry, Mark Mortimer, Todd Garrison, Steve Parent and Sharon Cutler. **Agricultural Commission**: Jane Belleville, Max Carbone, Ellen Gould and Peter Hawkes. **ADA Coordinator**: Kevin Rudden **Town Forest Committee**: Paul Doucette, Peter Brewer and Sue Barnett. **Town Hall Staff**: Daniel Byer and Jenn Welch, Parks Department Administrative Assistants; Jean Berthold, Assistant Assessor; Diane Willoughby, Select Board Administrative Assistant, Margaret Bonderencko, Town Clerk and Peg Tetreault Assistant Clerk; and Darlene Cormier, Conservation Commission Administrative Assistant. Volunteer Patrice Murphy. Steve Mabee, **MA State Geologist**. Trish Settles and Matt Franz **Central MA Regional Planning Commission**.

The Land Use Committee balanced the information from the community; the experience and expertise of the various town boards, and a survey distributed through the Mendon Master Plan Committee to develop the 2013-20 Mendon Open Space And Recreation Plan.

One source of data was the town-wide survey conducted by the Master Plan Committee. The process is still ongoing through a series of meetings and public forums. The surveys were mailed out on July 21, 2011 to 2163 households and they had 731 surveys returned. This is a very high rate of return (34%). Dozens of meetings have been held to develop the Master Plan with open space and recreation being two key areas in the report.

We also used information from the CMRPC's Blackstone Valley Prioritization Project. Members of various committees also participated in several meetings participating in the process of developing the Blackstone Valley Prioritization Project Report.

An ongoing source of information from the public was the annual assessment of the Land Use Committee's Five-Year Action Plan, which is a direct reflection of the OSRP goals. The Five-Year Plan was available to the public at the Taft Public Library and at Town Hall. Each year, for

the past five years, the Five-Year Action Plan has been approved at the Mendon Annual Town Meeting and vote has been unanimous. The 2013-8 Open Space and Recreation Plan was given to the Planning Board, the three Selectmen, the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission, the Board of Health, the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Conservation Commission and the Park Commissioners. Their letters of review and comments are included in Section 10 – Public Comments.

Mendon does not have any Environmental Justice Neighborhoods, although there are small areas in nearby towns.

The Land Use Committee meets approximately once a month and all meetings are posted and open to the public. Since the Land Use Committee has representatives from the Planning Board, The Community Preservation Committee, The Mendon Town Forest Committee, the Conservation Commission and the Select Board and often has many other townspeople attend the meetings, the exchange of information is ongoing. Other groups actively involved in the Land Use Committee meetings and the management of the open space parcels and recreational facilities include the Mendon Boy Scout Troop 1 and 44, the Bay State Trail Riders Association, the Mendon Park Commissioners, The Agricultural Commission members, softball league, soccer league and the Affordable Housing Coordinator, so there is a constant interchange of information.

Section 3 – Community Setting

A. Regional Context

Mendon is a hilltop community located in the historical Blackstone River Valley. According to the Department of Housing and Community Development's profile of Mendon, it has one of the best-preserved Federal Greek Revival hilltop village centers in the state, with large tracts of open land adjacent to the center. Mendon is 18.3 square miles or 11,712 acres.

Mendon finds itself in a convenient location to three urban areas: 33 miles southwest of Boston; 28 miles north of Providence, Rhode Island; and 18 miles southeast of Worcester. Mendon feels the pressure of rapid growth with the connection to Route 146 and the Massachusetts Turnpike, and easy access to Route 495, and as the surrounding towns reach build-out capacity. Preserving key parcels of land for open space is critical before it gets developed.

Mendon is part of the Blackstone River Watershed Association. BRWA was established in 1976 to preserve, protect and enhance the environmental quality and recreational opportunities of the Blackstone River and its tributaries. Mendon has worked with BRWA for water quality projects, storm water management and other regional activities.

Most of the houses in Mendon are single units. According to the 2010 US Census Report there were 88.9% single unit houses as compared to 59.8% in Worcester County. Also in 2010, 84.3% of the units in Mendon were owner occupied and 75.6 % of the houses in Mendon had 3-4 bedrooms. The average number of people per household in 2010 was 2.9, higher than the Worcester County average of 2.56. In 2010, there were only 3.8% vacant houses. Mendon has many families with children. This creates a need for sports fields and other active recreation facilities.

The housing stock in Mendon consists of 2.36% affordable units, far below the 10% encouraged by the state. In 2012, using CPA funds, Mendon hired a part time Affordable Housing Coordinator to navigate the state regulations and utilize the state programs to provide affordable housing in Mendon. There are many Mendon senior citizens and younger people who grew up in Mendon that have been priced out of town. There are people who work in Mendon and would like to live in the town they work, but cannot afford to. Mendon hopes to reach the 10% using the CPA funds effectively and provide housing needs to diversify the population in Mendon.

Mendon has a primarily upper middle class population and is fairly stable economically. However, the town has a history of conservative spending and balancing the budget. Townspeople also are passionate about preserving the rural character of the town. Overrides do not pass easily in Mendon, however, when it comes to preserving key pieces of open space, there has been success. Having the CPA and grants to supplement the open space purchases and active recreation projects has been essential in preserving land in Mendon. Working with neighboring towns to preserve land that straddle Mendon and other towns has also been crucial for successful projects. Mendon collaborates with other towns and regional organizations to make the open space and recreation projects more successful by sharing resources, volunteers and ideas.

Mendon has nurtured relations with several abutting towns and regional agencies to enhance the open space preservation and active recreation projects. Several of the recreational facilities are open to the general public. The Mendon Town Beach is open to the public and charges a nominal fee for entry. Trails systems that have been developed on the Meadow Brook Woods property and the Inman Hill Wildlife Conservation Area are open to the general public. These trails are a work in progress with some trails cleared, but more plans for trail connections. The Bay State Trail Riders Association had several trails rides on the properties and the Boy Scouts have also utilized these areas for hiking and camping. The general public also uses these trails.

One trail system is being developed by Southwick's Zoo, which will hook into the Meadow Brook Woods property and to the Town Forest. Southwick's draws an average of 300,000 people each year to Mendon.

One Eagle Scout project set up a regulation orienteering course on the Meadow Brook Woods property. Successfully completing a regulation orienteering course is a requirement to become an Eagle Scout. Previously, it was difficult for Boy Scouts in Mendon and the neighboring towns to complete this requirement, because there was not a course in the Blackstone Valley. Now with the course in Mendon, it is much more convenient and the course is open to the general public.

Mendon has good potential for establishing protected greenway corridors in several parts of town. One significant area is around the southeast corner of Mendon and the Blackstone town line. Mendon has worked with the Blackstone, mostly through the Metacomet Land Trust to preserve land in this area of town. The Division of Fisheries and Wildlife manages 375 acres that runs from the Town of Mendon into the Town of Blackstone. This land also connects to the spectacular 180-acre Daniel's Farm in the Town of Blackstone that was donated to the Metacomet Land Trust. Over the last decade, the Town of Mendon has bought properties that abut this protected greenway. These properties include: the 150-acre Wood property, the 14-acre Paddock property and the 96-acre Kelly Farm. Surrounding this 800+ acres of protected open space are hundreds of acres of more open space in Mendon, that if added to this acreage would establish a significant protected greenway corridor. It contains predominantly BioMap2 Core Habitat as well as Critical Natural Landscape. This area is called the Inman Hill Wildlife Conservation Area.

On the western part of Mendon, there is another area of approximately 500 acres of contiguous open space that straddles the Town of Mendon and Town of Uxbridge town line and is within 1000 acres of mostly undeveloped land in Mendon and Uxbridge. The open space contains predominantly BioMap2 Critical Natural Landscape and an area of Core Habitat. The Town of Mendon preserved the 76-acre former Chaleki and Nolet properties, which are now called Meadow Brook Woods. It abuts the 186-acre Trustees of Reservations Cormier Woods property, which spills into the Town of Uxbridge.

The Town of Mendon has seen the positive outcomes from working with area towns and agencies. Many positive relationships have been developed to continue the connections to improve the open space corridors and the recreational options in Mendon. Mendon has worked with Uxbridge and the Trustees of Reservations (TTOR) on several projects. For example, the Mendon Land Use Committee helped start the Uxbridge Preservation group working with the Trustees of Reservation Cormier Woods caretakers. The idea was to encourage Mendon's Uxbridge neighbors to become more involved in land preservation, since valuable open space in Mendon flows into Uxbridge. Many strong and productive networks have developed.

Another effort to stay connected to the regional context is having a representative on the Central MA Regional Planning Commission and being involved with the Blackstone Valley Prioritization Project, stressing areas of high value for wildlife preservation and passive recreation. Mendon has a representative on the regional Metacomet Land Trust and maintains contacts with the Upton and Uxbridge Conservation Commissions, which are both towns that abut Mendon.

Another environmental program between Uxbridge, Mendon and Upton, which effects the wildlife and quality of the open space, was to develop a safe mosquito control program that does not use nuisance spraying as the mainstay of the program (nuisance spraying is spraying when there is not a known threat of mosquito borne disease). Residents were concerned with the detrimental effects of the pesticides used in the nuisance spraying and the quality of the mosquito control project presented to the town. The pesticides used are highly toxic to bees, mosquito predators and other aquatic species, throwing the ecological balance off. The development of the program is ongoing and focuses on public education and source control. The program has strengthened the network of environmentally conscious people in Mendon and surrounding towns.

The Mendon Land Use Committee worked with neighboring towns to make people aware that motorized off-highway vehicles are *not* allowed on the trails. Through meetings, articles, ongoing discussions, surveillance by neighbors of the open space, and communication with the Mendon Police and the MA Environmental Police Officers, the off-highway vehicles on the trails has been reduced, but more work needs to be done.

Another regional program between Mendon and Uxbridge has been to clear out the invasive and non-native water chestnut weeds in the Inman Pond on the Meadow Brook Woods property through mechanical removal and volunteer hand pulling of the weeds.

Also on the Inman Pond, previously the beavers on the pond had been trapped and killed. Mendon and Uxbridge have worked together to install a Beaver Solutions Device that allows the water flow under the dam undetected by the beavers. This will allow the beavers to enhance this wildlife habitat.

Mendon and Upton collaborate on soccer, baseball, football and softball club activities. Sports fields are shared and the teams consist of Mendon and Upton children. More sports fields are needed and the Land Use Committee is looking at locations to provide the space for fields.

Mendon plans to continue the collaboration with abutting towns and regional organizations on the open space and recreation projects to utilize the synergistic energy of combining the area talent, interest and information.

B. History of the Community

Very Early History – Mid to Late 17th Century

Mendon became a town on May 15, 1667 five years after a sixty-four square mile tract had been purchased from Indians. One of the early attacks of King Philip's War took place in Mendon on July of 1675, and by winter, a second attack left the young town sacked and burned. Both attacks were by Nipmuc Indians. Upon King Philip's (a Native American) death the following year, the Nipmuc Indians fled to join other tribes in New York and Canada, leaving only a trace of its population. By 1680, twenty families had returned to Mendon.

18th Century

One of Mendon's chief claims to fame is her "mother town" status. Mendon's bigness became a handicap as the settlers began spreading out from the center to form new villages on the Blackstone, Mumford, Mill, Charles and West rivers. Abundant waterpower in these new settlements was soon put to use for grist and saw mills.

Mendon experienced reluctant motherhood several times, grudgingly yielding approximately forty-six square miles to eight offspring towns. This resulted in the incorporation of Uxbridge in 1727, Bellingham in 1719, Upton in 1735, Milford in 1780 and Blackstone in 1845. These are the children of "Mother Mendon." Mendon also has 3 grandchildren. Northbridge broke off from Uxbridge, Hopedale from Milford and Millville from Blackstone. Being surrounded by these intensely industrialized towns forced Mendon to become an agricultural town and a regional food producer.

Mendon started growing from within; new farms, new roads, new schools, new and larger meetinghouses. As the eighteenth century came to a close, the Town of Mendon was completely settled in a pattern of farms spiraling in all directions from the center. Population was around 2000, even with the loss of Milford. Mendon Center was not a nucleated community; it was little more than the meetinghouse site of a network of dispersed farms. This would all change shortly after the turn of the century.

19th Century

The 19th century would bring the best and the worst of times to Mendon. The early decades of this century were the years where Mendon reached a peak in population, its widest range of activities, its greatest prosperity, and the fullest extent of architectural development. The significance of Mendon's historic district was established in this period, particularly since whatever Colonial-era buildings remained were replaced.

Spirits were high as Mendon enjoyed the early fruits of the industrial economy. For a short time, the town rivaled Worcester in this regard. Architectural development abounded; the Second Unitarian Church on Maple Street, large lavish houses along Hastings Street and the numerous smaller dwellings of Mendon's growing middle class. Mendon's plan was a significant

representation (and is still to this day), of the New England village or town center as it developed in this Federal Period.

The center grew significantly in size and stature. The early introduction of water-powered machinery for the processing of wool and the weaving of fabric in the Blackstone Valley put the Mendon villages of Blackstone and Millville on the map. Textile manufacturing enterprises multiplied. Labor forces grew rapidly and financial investment, banking and real estate speculation brought new personalities and venture capital into town. Well-established farms prospered as improved transportation, notably the Blackstone Canal (1828), opened up new markets. A gradual shift was made from the traditional farming practices of the eighteenth century, which heavily favored beef production, to dairy and orchard products. Mendon center acquired the characteristics of a nucleated New England village.

During the mid-1800's, Mendon was grappling with the controversial issue of Blackstone's separation. Having rejected requests for years, Mendon's leaders finally relented and the Town of Blackstone (which at the time included Millville) was created in 1845. Because of the tremendous economic development in the industrial villages along the Blackstone River, the loss of Blackstone had repercussions more serious than earlier separations from Mother Mendon. The town's personal and real estate valuation plummeted. Blackstone comprised nearly 60% of the town's real estate value and over 70% of its personal estate. Positioned in the center of three prospering industrial towns: Uxbridge, Milford and Blackstone, Mendon was reduced to a secondary status between these neighboring towns, where it remained until it became fashionable to live in the country many, many years later.

If not a thriving commercial center, Mendon was still a viable rural town. Farming and small-scale boot and shoe making flourished. The larger boot factories were located in Albeeville on the Mill River, but numerous small shops appeared in the center. This work continued for about thirty years, between 1845 and 1875. One of the most notable factories was W.H. Comstock's shop, located behind his families' distinctive Italianate residence on the northwesterly corner of Main and Maple streets. There is a significant gap in the architectural catalog of the center for the last half of the nineteenth century and it coincides with this period when Mendon reverted to being an isolated rural frontier once more.

When the railroads bypassed Mendon, going through Uxbridge and Milford instead, the town was hurt by the withdrawal of the shoe shops, but was helped travel-wise. People could take a stage to Milford or Uxbridge and then the train to Boston, Worcester or Providence.

20th Century

The twentieth century opened with prospects for the center's economy substantially improved. The town had now staked its future on being a rural retreat for both tourists and new residents. The town with its wonderful natural beauty, its great elevation, its cool and healthy atmosphere, and its beautiful lake, would soon be a noted summer resort and numbers of valuable and wealthy citizens whose places of business were elsewhere, would soon reside in Mendon.

On December 20, 1901, the Milford and Uxbridge Trolley Line opened, following a route that was constructed through Mendon. There was “enthusiasm everywhere”. The trolley company built a park on Nipmuc Lake and Mendon became even more of a recreational town for working families working in surrounding towns. The trolley also made it possible for people to live in rural Mendon and work in one of the neighboring urban towns. The town’s image and self-confidence improved throughout the century.

In the great house-building frenzy that followed the Second World War, Mendon’s housing stock was noticeably expanded, although not in any planned or systematic manner. Greater development occurred in the rural portions of the town and represent the continued, gradual growth of Mendon as a bedroom community.

21st Century

Mendon has experienced a greater impact from the sprawling Boston metropolis. Many of the historic farms surrounding the center have been the targets of dense housing subdivisions. Ironically, the historic farms situated in and about the center have made the best sites for housing. Thus, the center is becoming hemmed in with suburban housing while much of the hard scrapple parts of the town remain less intensively developed. Surviving farms in the center face the constant threat of development, which would have an adverse effect on the historic rural setting of the center. The center currently has weathered this housing explosion and remains remarkably intact to its nineteenth-century fabric. Still, Mendon Center has emerged from the twentieth century with its relics and monuments to its Colonial past, its distinctive Federal Period buildings and plan, and the improvements and scars of the ensuing 150 years of maturation well in place. Mendon remains a spectacular link to the past. Its residents realize this, calling it “Mendon Gold.”

In recent years, the Mennonite religious community has found the Town of Mendon attractive because of the agricultural history. Many members of the Mennonite community are settling here and buying or renting large tracts of land to farm on. They might be a key group to carry on the tradition of Mendon’s agricultural role in the region.

C. Population Characteristics

Population Trends: Mendon’s population grew at a rapid pace through the 1980’s and 1990’s and this fast rate of population growth continued through 2008. The Census population for 2000 was 5,286. The Town Clerk’s Office reported a population of 6,317 for the year 2010; this represents a 20% growth over the ten-year period. In 2008, the Mendon housing market took a dip, as it did across the state. However, the area real estate agents say the market is picking up and predict an increase in housing and land purchases.

According to the 2012 census, there are 1466 children 18 years or younger. This is approximately 23% of the Mendon population (1233 are 5-18 years old and 233 are four years old or younger). The growth in the number of school-aged children is reflected in the increased usage and the need for more town recreational facilities and playing fields.

The towns surrounding Mendon are reaching their build out capacity, which puts pressure on Mendon’s open space being developed into subdivisions. Mendon’s fields and farmlands, woodlands and waterways, stone walls and scenic vistas, provide a peaceful oasis of rustic charm in comparison to the burgeoning populations of some of the neighboring towns.

A study by the Central MA Regional Planning Commission estimated population increases for local towns. They compared Mendon's population from the 2010 US Census, which was 5839, and Mendon's projected population in 2035, which was calculated at 6,740. This is a 15% increase in population. However, according to the Map E - Mendon Maximum Zoning Buildout Map Summary Buildout Statistics, Mendon has 7,332 acres of buildable land and the potential to add 9884 new residents, 2,632 new school aged children and 81 miles of new roads. This impact needs to be considered when Mendon is preserving open space.

Upton also has the potential for a great increase in growth and both towns are in a regional school district together. This increase in population will affect the demand on town services. Calculations indicated that in 2011, it cost Mendon approximately \$9,129 for each new home built in Mendon, because the taxes collected did not cover the cost of town services. The new homes have more children and their taxes do not cover the cost of educating their children. This pressure will make it harder for Mendon residents to set aside funds for open space preservation and active recreation. There is strong support for supporting the Mendon-Upton School District and it is important to do so, however it also makes a cogent economic argument to preserve critical open space where a subdivision is planned, because of the annual cost to the Mendon budget from each new home.

Population Density: According to the Central MA Regional Planning Commission, using the 2010 US Census Statistics, the population density in Mendon is still one of the lowest in the area at 320 per square mile. Mendon has 18 square miles of land area. Projections by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, predict the density reaching 513 people per square mile in the year 2030. This density is one of the lowest in the region. For comparison, population densities in surrounding towns in the year 2004 follow: Milford 1,812, Hopedale 1,154, Bellingham 826, Blackstone 803, Northbridge 761, Uxbridge 381 and Douglas 191.

With regards to the housing stock, 89% are single family home, with a minimum of 60,000 of upland and 11% are multi-family homes. An issue with Mendon development is sprawl. To address this issue, in 2008, Mendon passed an open space communities bylaw, allowing houses to be built more densely with a requirement that a minimum of 55% of the land be set aside for open space. This should help reduce the problem of sprawling growth that can eat up open space with lawns, other non-native plants and buildings. It lessens the amount of road miles making it a win /win for the town and the developer. This should also help to reduce the fragmentation of large areas of contiguous open space.

Employment Trends: The economic base of Mendon does not include manufacturing industries, but primarily retail stores, food services, educational institutions, professional businesses, service oriented businesses and the municipality. The commercial zones in Mendon are very limited and there are not any major changes to these zones being planned and therefore, no indications that there will be major changes in employment trends in Mendon in the next seven years.

The employment rates in Mendon are better than the state and county average. Since 2000, Mendon has had an unemployment rate 1-2% below the state average. The gap has widened in 2009 and 2010 with Mendon's unemployment rate 6.3% versus the state at closer to 8%. In August 2013, Mendon's unemployment rate was 5.7%, in Worcester County it was 7.8% and in Massachusetts 6.8%. There are no indications that this will change in the near future.

In FY13, commercial, industrial and personal property taxes contributed \$1,322,371 to the tax base. A new car dealership, Imperial, was built in 2007 and it alone contributed \$194,000 to the tax base. This has been the most recent change to employment in Mendon in the past decade.

Sixty seven percent of the Master Plan survey respondents are somewhat concerned or very concerned with the size and scale of the commercial development in Mendon. As Mendon looks to increase its tax base it needs to make sure that the commercial development fits with the scale of a rural residential town.

The Mendon Select Board is working to increase the commercial tax base, focusing the development on the major routes through Mendon, Routes 16 and 140. Some of the parcels have been deepened for commercial development to avoid only strip mall development. Through the Green Communities program there are three areas in town that are zoned for large-scale ground mounted solar PV systems. The Mendon Select Board hopes to attract businesses that will add to the tax base in Mendon, but also be in scale with the rural character of the town. A larger tax base could help to fund open space and recreation projects. It would also potentially provide employment opportunities.

Family Income: Mendon is predominantly a middle to upper-middle class residential community. The median family income is \$108,173, a little higher than neighboring towns (Bellingham \$93,655, Uxbridge \$94,830, Blackstone \$87,752) and less than neighboring Upton where the median family income is \$132,703.

Money goes far in Mendon, because of an incredible volunteer base. A recent example is the Park Commissioners organized a well-attended community build for the town's new playground, which was in desperate need of replacement. CPA funds were used to buy the equipment and volunteers installed it. The Community Preservation Committee tries to leverage the funds spent by encouraging the use of matching grants, bargain sales and cooperation from other groups to help funds projects.

Mendon does not have an Environmental Justice population in the town. There is one in the nearby Town of Milford.

Mendon will need to make accommodations for passive and active recreation for the growing numbers of town residents. Open space will need to be preserved for passive recreation and for active recreation facilities before development gobbles it up.

D. Growth and Development Patterns

1. Patterns and trends

Mendon has grown from its agricultural beginnings to a rural, residential community in recent years. The town has developed mostly through single-family lots and subdivisions and the trend continues in that direction. It is economics that pushed out the farms. The real estate market has been more profitable. Over the years, the productive farming land and open space have been developed. In 2005, housing lots (60,000 sq ft) were selling for a high of \$250,000. According to the Mendon Assessor's Office, they are currently selling for \$154,500. Mendon realtors indicate that the housing sales are increasing and predict the housing prices will go up. Therefore, now is a good time for Mendon to purchase land for the preservation for open space and active recreation, such as sports fields.

With the land value for housing so high, it has made farming financially unfeasible. Several of the farms were passed down to children who did not want to continue in farming and moved away. In several situations the heirs wanted the cash and not the land. In other situations, families are land rich and cash poor and need to sell the land to get the cash to pay off estate taxes. Land is a still valuable commodity in Mendon.

There are approximately three working farms in Mendon and several farmsteads on which people live, but do not derive their income. Many of these farms are under Chapter 61A, giving the Town of Mendon the right-of-first-refusal to buy these properties. This gives the Town the opportunity to preserve these farmlands.

There has been a new interest with farming with an Agricultural Commission being established in 2011 and a “Right to Farm” bylaw passing in 2012. There is the support in Mendon to have a farming sector in the town.

2. Infrastructure

Private wells and private septic systems serve most of Mendon. There are a few residential areas bordering the Town of Hopedale, along Route 16 and Route 140 that use municipal water from Hopedale. Because Mendon relies on the private wells and septic systems this does limit the land development to some extent, a single-family lot has to be 60,000-sq. ft. of upland. It also makes it more of a challenge to the Town to diversify the tax base, as businesses are not as eager to look at Mendon. This will be a challenge for the town to look at and decide what would be best for the town's future.

There are no major transportation facilities in Mendon. The closest mass transit station is the Franklin MBTA line, a 15-minute ride from the center of Mendon. The closest major route is Route 495. This is about a 10-minute drive from the center of Mendon. There are no plans for transportation facilities to be built in Mendon.

Although there are not mass transit facilities or major highways in Mendon, it is a town that people drive through to get to work or travel elsewhere. A study requested by the Town in 2005 found that on Route 16 an average of approximately 15,000 cars traveled on it per day. The traffic study also showed that 13,600 cars travel on Main Street per day and 15,800 on Hartford Avenue East, east/west route through Town. The wear and tear of traffic could create a high cost to Mendon taxpayers when the Town's budget goes to pay for the maintenance and reconstruction of roads in Mendon because of the heavily traveled roads.

Most of the open space areas are away from the major roads providing better areas for wildlife and enhanced passive recreation activities. However, some of the scenic farms are along these routes. These farms provide roadside scenic vistas and could be located in strategic locations where if the farms were converted to working farms, then farmers selling their products would be more accessible to customers. The active recreation areas have been and should be planned by roads that are easily assessable and provide ample parking.

3. Long-term development patterns

Currently Mendon's growth comes from single-family lot development and subdivisions. Most of the Town is zoned residential except along Route 140 and Route 16 that primarily have a 200-foot setback for business development, with only 26.8 acres of land in the business district that is developable. See **Required Map 3**. There are bylaws in the works to expand some of these

districts to encourage commercial development that fits the scale of Mendon's rural residential landscape.

In 2001, the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA) sponsored the creation of a set of build out maps and analyses for all 351 cities and towns within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. These maps and analyses depict what a community would look like if remaining undeveloped land were to be completely developed. For the Town of Mendon, the EOEEA concluded that there were 7,332 acres of developable land that if completely developed would result in 3,581 new residential lots, 81 miles of new roads, 9,884 in new population and 2,632 new school age children. See **Optional Map E – Maximum Zoning Build-Out Map**. Although this map was done in 2001, the potential build out still remains the same. Mendon could be turned into sprawling subdivisions. Mendon needs to plan so that land can be preserved in the process of building new homes.

Required Map 1 – Regional Context Map

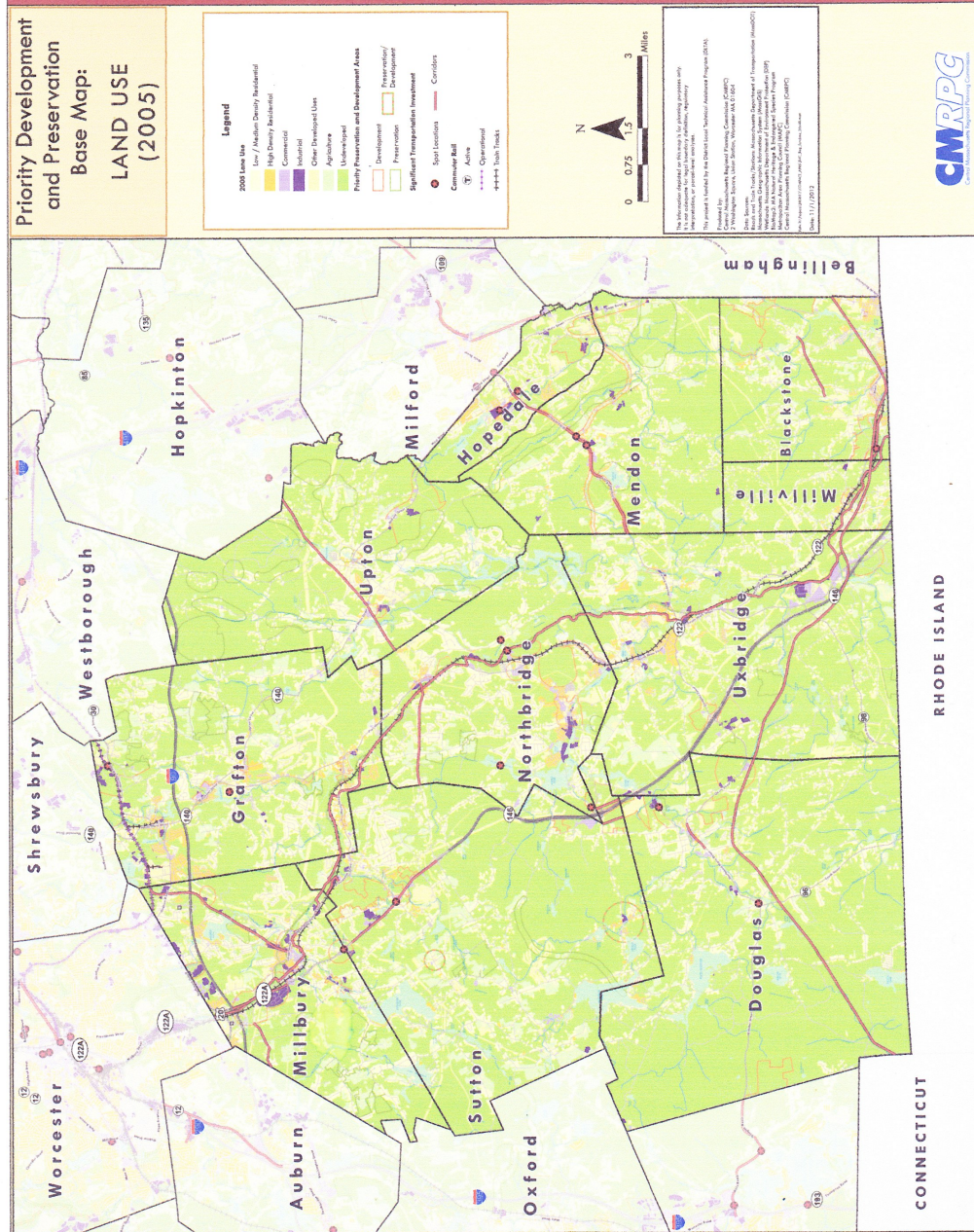
Required Map 2 – Environmental Justice Map

Required Map 3 – Zoning Map

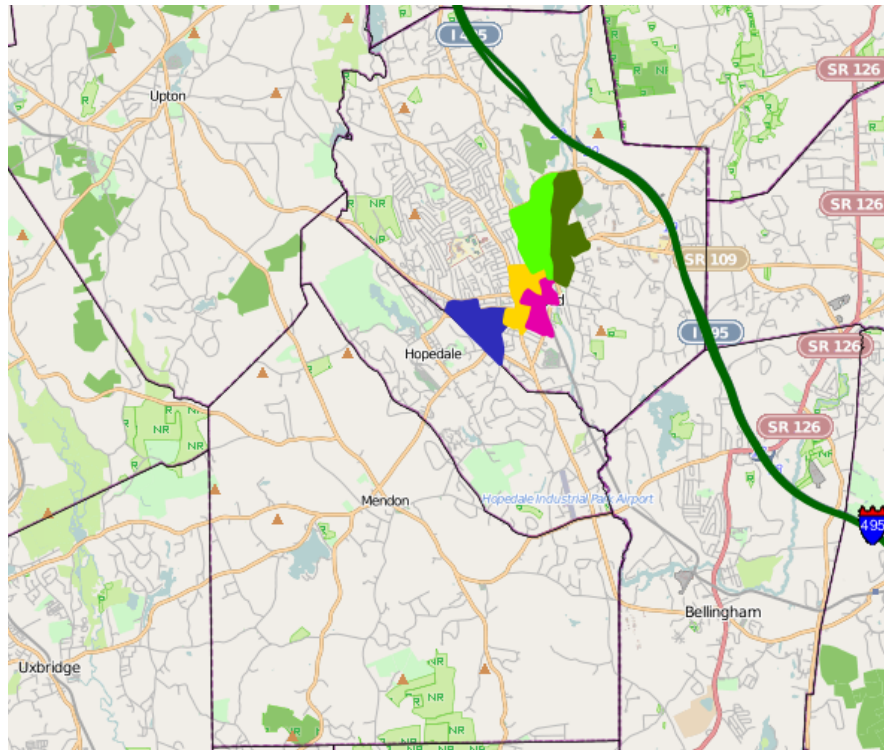
Optional Map A – Historic Communities Map

Optional Map E – Maximum Zoning Build-Out Map

BLACKSTONE VALLEY PRIORITIZATION PROJECT

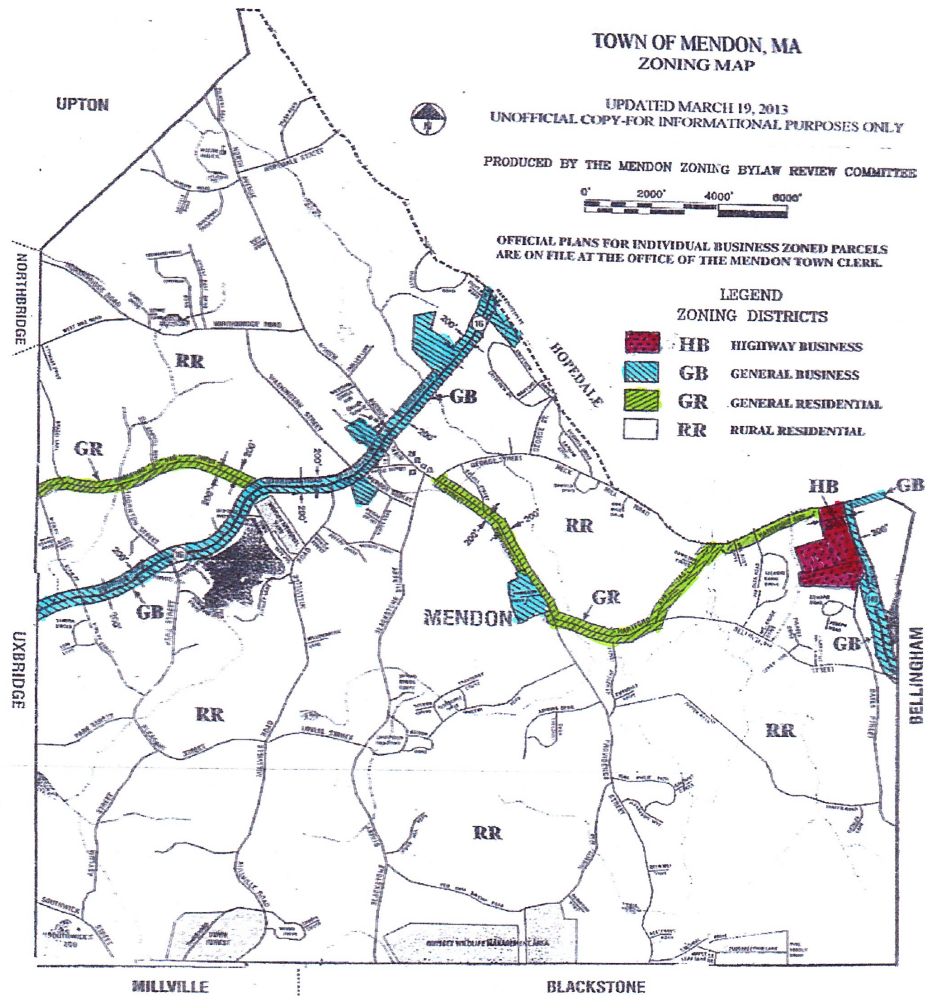


Required Map 2 – Environmental Justice Map With neighboring towns

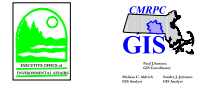


Census 2010 Environmental Justice Populations

- Minority
- Income
- English Isolation
- Minority and Income
- Minority and English Isolation
- Income and English Isolation
- Minority, Income and English Isolation



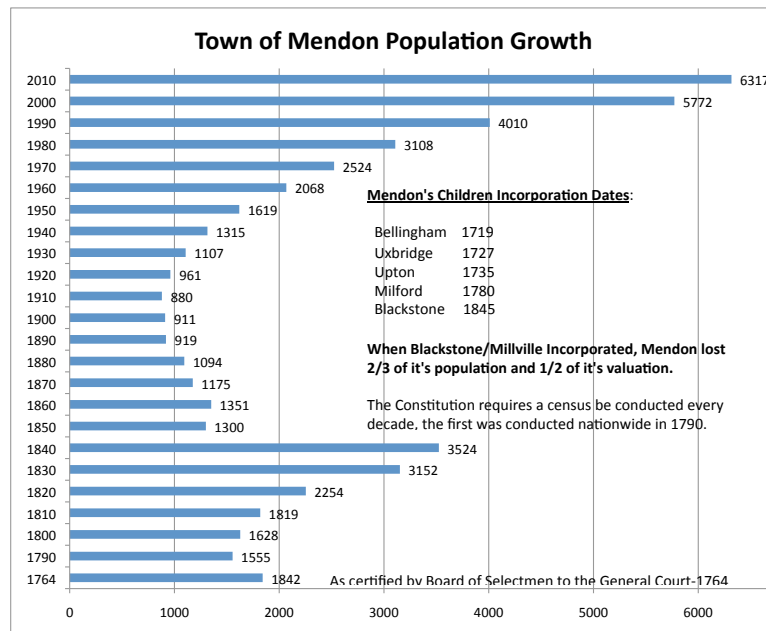




Zoning District Description		
Zoncode	District	Percentage
R	Residential	97.70
B	Business	2.30

[illegible]

Year	Population
1764	1842
1790	1555
1800	1628
1810	1819
1820	2254
1830	3152
1840	3524
1850	1300
1860	1351
1870	1175
1880	1094
1890	919
1900	911
1910	880
1920	961
1930	1107
1940	1315
1950	1619
1960	2068
1970	2524
1980	3108
1990	4010
2000	5772
2010	6317



Section 4 - Environmental Inventory and Analysis

A. Geology, Soils and Topography

Bedrock geology has been mapped for the entire State of Massachusetts by the United States Geologic Survey (USGS). Bedrock in the vicinity of Mendon consists of the Milford Granite, Pongansett Gneiss and undivided quartzite, schist, phyllite, marble and metavolcanic rocks. Limited information on surficial geology has been mapped by the Massachusetts Geographic Information System (MassGIS). This information identifies the majority of Mendon as being covered by till with limited sand and gravel and alluvium deposits centered around Muddy Brook, along the northeastern town border as illustrated in Required Map 2.

The topography of Mendon is characterized by rolling hills and fields. Most of the land exists at elevations of between 200 to 400 feet above mean sea level (amsl). Ground surface elevations generally decrease from northwest to southeast. A maximum ground surface elevation of approximately 595 feet amsl exists in the northwestern portion of town at Miscoe Hill. Muddy Brook, located in the northeast part of town is situated within a relatively narrow northwest-southeast trending drainage basin. This basin mimics that of the Mill River located just to the east. The western portion of town is drained to the west by Meadow Brook and Rocky Meadow Brook. These features generally have flatter sub-drainage basins with more extensive wetlands.

Additional detail on soils within Mendon are provided in the Interim Soils Report for Southern Worcester County. Soils present within Mendon consist of fine sandy loams and mucks. The Chatfield-Hollis complex covers much of the southwestern portion of town. This classification identifies areas where bedrock has been found to be present at depths of 4 feet or less below ground surface. This particular complex is also characterized by steep land slopes (15% to 35%). Areas with slopes of this magnitude may pose significant limitations to development. The shallow depth to bedrock and steep slopes make it impractical to use these areas for cemetery or active recreational purposes.

Several areas of Mendon are covered by soils identified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) as “Prime Farmland” including soils from the Merrimac, Scituate, Montauk and Canton series. These areas comprise approximately 20% of the town. The majority of these areas are centered along Providence Road and North Avenue, and include some of the most significant scenic views, which define the character of the town. These areas are very attractive for residential development, which would result in the obstruction of these scenic views, and change the rural, agricultural appearance of the town.

B. Landscape Character

As a town formerly focused on farming as its main economic interest, Mendon has preserved much of its open fields and forests while neighboring communities have seen significant residential and commercial development over the past several years. This has allowed Mendon to maintain a landscape characterized by open fields, forests, and wetlands reminiscent of old-time New England communities. Particular areas of interest within the Town of Mendon include Lake Nipmuc, scenic views such as that along North Avenue and Providence Road and large areas of open space located throughout the Town. Lake Nipmuc is a surface water body covering approximately 85 acres located in the central-western portion of town. Lake Nipmuc currently supports activities such as boating, swimming, and fishing. The Mendon Town Beach is located off of Taft Avenue, along the lake’s eastern shoreline. The lake also provides a scenic backdrop enjoyed by both commercial establishments and nearby residents.

Scenic views, such as that provided by the dairy farm located along North Avenue, are among the main attractions, which draw people to towns like Mendon. Adjacent to the road, the rock walls and rolling fields of the dairy farm are a reminder of the farming history of Mendon. The open fields allow residents and travelers along North Avenue an unobstructed view of the valley through which Muddy Brook flows.

In the southern part of Mendon there is an extensive property, which consists of large open fields and old stone walls mixed with wooded areas, which adds to the rural, agricultural character of Mendon. This property overlies a sand and gravel deposit, which may have the potential to serve as a high yield aquifer. Development of this area may result in degradation of the quality of the water within this aquifer due to the presence of septic systems, application of fertilizers, etc.

New development conducted in any of these areas of town could result in detrimental effects to the environment and the overall character of the Town of Mendon. Development within the watershed of Lake Nipmuc could result in additional surface water runoff and erosion of soils into the lake, which could significantly alter the water quality of the lake. Also, additional loading of nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus from the application of fertilizers and the presence of septic systems and pets, may act to deplete the dissolved oxygen in the lake below

levels capable of supporting aquatic life. This may also act to significantly increase the density of vegetation within the lake creating problems with respect to recreational uses of the lake as well as altering the habitat currently provided by the lake.

Construction of new houses or other facilities over or in the vicinity of Mendon's open fields and forests will act to replace Mendon's current rural character with that of a fully developed residential, commercial or industrial area similar to other small cities located in southern Massachusetts.

C. Water Resources

1. Watersheds

Most of Mendon is located within the watershed of the Blackstone River. A small portion of the town, which lies east of Route 140 falls within the Charles River Watershed. The Blackstone River Watershed Association (BRWA) is involved in a number of initiatives aimed at preserving and improving the overall conditions of the watershed and the water quality within the Blackstone River and its tributaries. These efforts include programs to control invasive species within the watershed, improve access to the river for appropriate recreational purposes, quantify flow contribution of various tributaries near the headwaters, and monitor water quality within the River and its tributaries. The water quality-monitoring program includes collection of water samples on a monthly basis between the months of April through November. One sample location is located at the southern end of Mendon, within the Mill River as it flows beyond Mendon's southern border. Available results showed the Mill River sample to be of excellent quality with respect to temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen for almost every sample. Turbidity and nitrate were generally found to be in "good" to "excellent" condition. Orthophosphate was found to be "poor" to "good". On the overall watershed report card, this area was rated as "excellent" in aesthetics, "good" for chemical concentrations, and "fair" for nutrients.

The Charles River Watershed Association also is involved in a number of initiatives throughout the Charles River Watershed. However, as such a limited area of Mendon is located within the Charles River Watershed, these efforts do not specifically address Mendon. The reach of the Charles River located within Mendon is noted to exceed the boating standard based on data obtained from a nearby sampling location located in Bellingham.

2. Surface Water

Surface water resources within the Town of Mendon are presented on Required Map 4. The most significant surface water body, for recreational uses, located within the Town of Mendon is the 85-acre Lake Nipmuc, which is drained by Meadow Brook. Lake Nipmuc has not received a surface water classification from the State of Massachusetts. However, based on its current uses (recreation) it would be expected that the lake would be designated as a Class B water body. This classification identifies bodies of water, which are suitable as habitats for fish and other aquatic life and wildlife. Class B waters are also suitable for swimming, wading, water skiing, fishing and boating.

In 2007, the Lake Nipmuc Association was formed. The organization has educated lake residents and others in ways to improve the quality of the lake water. They conduct water testing, have removed large quantities of Purple Loosestrife, they fixed a major problem of roadside pollutants being drained into the lake, they set up a septic management loan program so resident could

affordably fix their septic systems and hold many other events. It has greatly improved the quality of the lake water and the awareness of town residents about this valuable resource.

3. Aquifer Recharge Areas

The only areas of aquifer recharge mapped in the Town of Mendon are the Zones of Contribution. With the exception of the Talbot Farm area and a number of residences along the areas of Routes 16 and 140 in the eastern portion of town, drinking water is obtained through private wells. The majority of these wells draw water from fractures within bedrock. Due to the fact that information regarding the orientation, etc. of these fractures is not currently available, identification and protection of any associated recharge areas is not possible at this time. This data gap should be addressed in the future to allow the Town of Mendon to take appropriate measures to protect the drinking water resources being utilized by most of its residents.

Groundwater resource protection is accomplished through open space preservation and one and a half acre residential zoning. These large lots give residents the assurance that there will be safe distances between wells and septic disposal areas to protect the quality of the drinking water.

The land use practices in the areas where the water originates highly influence the quality of groundwater produced by local private wells. The first goal of a groundwater protection program is to make sure that we have enough water by promoting the recharge of stormwater. The recently approved Stormwater Management By-Law goes a long way toward achieving the goal of protecting the groundwater supply. Applicable to new development that disturbs an acre or more of land, the by-law incorporates the 2008 Massachusetts Stormwater Handbook. Standard #3, in particular, requires the restoration of recharge through infiltration measures and careful site design.

4. Flood Hazard Areas

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recently updated the delineation of all special flood hazard areas within the Town of Mendon. Mendon has established a Flood Hazard Overlay District that includes new development and use regulations. Flood plains in Mendon have been mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Areas identified as Zone A flood areas (100-year flood zones) are limited to the immediate areas surrounding the larger surface water bodies in town. These areas include Lake Nipmuc and the lower portions of the Mill River as well as the wetland area associated with Long Meadow, in the northwest portion of town. Zone B flood areas (500-year flood zones) present in town are again limited to the immediate areas of smaller surface water bodies. Particularly, Zone B areas have been identified along Muddy and Spring Brooks as well as other scattered wetlands in town.

5. Wetlands

Much of Mendon is covered by scattered, small forested and non-forested wetland areas, based on a review of the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) maps, published by the U.S. Department of the Interior. The State of Massachusetts has yet to map wetlands in the area of Mendon according to a representative from the Wetlands Conservancy Program.

Efforts to map wetlands in the area are being undertaken by the State. Other surface water bodies in town include Muddy and Spring Brooks, which combine before discharging to the Mill River in the southeastern portion of town. The Mill River is classified by the State of Massachusetts as a Class B water body.

D. Vegetation

Vegetation present in the Town of Mendon is generally typical of the surrounding vicinity. Tree species include pines, elm, maples, oak, birch, etc. The majority of town is forested. Extensive areas of forested lands such as that along Northbridge Road and in the southeast portion of town are used by area hunters. The south portion of Mendon has been the focus for land preservation projects that support hiking or other passive recreation activities during certain times of the year.

The climbing fern, which is found in Mendon, is listed as a species of special concern by the Massachusetts Natural Heritage Program. This plant grows in pine-oak-maple wooded areas with open understory, moist thickets and stream margins. The climbing fern prefers sandy, acidic soils, rich in humus but nutrient poor. Although populations of the climbing fern are abundant where they are found, areas where the fern is found are rare and localized.

Public Shade Trees: Public shade trees in Mendon are mostly located on the roadsides in Mendon. Many of them are located along the 15 designated Scenic Roads, which are protected if there is road construction on the Scenic Roads.

The Tree Warden, Howard Phipps, monitors the shade trees health to determine which trees might have diseased or dead wood and follows up with treatment, pruning or removal where necessary. Phipps also maintains close contact with National Grid to monitor trees that might be hitting the electrical wires or cause electrical outages during storms. National Grid has a private grant to examine private and public trees.

Two significant shades trees are located in the town center in Founders' Park. They are two sycamore trees estimated to be 150 years old and they tower magnificently over the park. National Grid wanted to take down one of the trees in 2013, but after Mendon's Tree Warden, Howard Phipps, requested further analysis of the tree, it was determined that the tree would not have to be taken down. National Grid agreed with this analysis. The Mendon Land Use Committee and the Park Commissioners are working on a care management plan for the two trees, so that they will maintain their health and remain standing for as long as they are not a safety hazard. Bartlett Tree Expert Certified Arborist, Julian Reese, predicts that with proper care the trees could live another 100 years.

The Mendon Tree Warden and the Land Use Committee have ongoing discussions with National Grid trying to balance the need to trim and cut down trees around electric lines and preserving the shade trees. The Tree Warden also has his own budget.

E. Fisheries and Wildlife

Wildlife present within the Town of Mendon include several species typically observed in rural Massachusetts communities. These include: deer, pileated woodpeckers, fishers, woodcock, kestrels, bobolinks, eastern meadow larks, racoons, pheasants, partridges, skunks, wild turkeys, fox, rabbit, woodchuck and a variety of fish species. However, several of the birds are decreasing in numbers because of habitat destruction and other factors. Most of these species are severely impacted by residential and/or commercial development. Such development acts to destroy or fragmentize the areas capable of supporting the habitat requirements. If species such as deer are not allowed proper habitat environments, as well as corridors through which to move from one area to the next, the population will quickly deplete the available food supply. Construction of

roads and development of wooded areas act to reduce the available habitat for these species. Also, available habitats, which are not destroyed by development, may become inaccessible to the species population.

In addition to the species mentioned above, the Town of Mendon also encompasses habitats supporting species identified by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife as being threatened species or species of special concern. **Table 1** provides a summary of these species, their respective habitat requirements and some recommendations for management of each species environment to provide adequate protection of their habitats. This information was obtained through the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program.

**TABLE 1
SUMMARY OF RARE, THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES
LOCATED WITHIN THE TOWN OF MENDON**

Species Name	Status	Habitat Requirements	Management Recommendations
Blanding's Turtle <i>Emydoidea blandingii</i>	Threatened Species	Primarily aquatic preferring vegetated shallow ponds Observed on land during nesting activities	Restrict destruction of suitable habitats and immediate surrounding areas
Eastern Box Turtle <i>Terrapene carolina</i>	Species of Special Concern	Primarily a woodland species Also inhabits pastures, meadows, marshes, bogs, and cranberry dominated swales	Limit habitat destruction due to development Maintain large areas without roads bisecting the turtle's habitat
American Brook Lamprey <i>Lampetra appendix</i>	Threatened Species	Clear, cool streams averaging more than 15 feet in width, having gravel or sand beds	Young are vulnerable to siltation and pollution Minimize changes in water levels in streams (i.e. runoff), and stream alteration projects
Wood Turtle <i>Glyptemys insculpta</i>	Species of Special Concern	Slow moving streams with sandy beds and heavily vegetated stream banks	Protect riverine corridors Establish 50-foot "no-cut" boundaries along streams and rivers Promote establishment of densely vegetated meadows
Climbing Fern <i>Lygodium palmatum</i>	Species of Special Concern	Sandy, acidic soils, rich in humus, but nutrient poor	Protecting areas where the plants are found or possess the conditions for growth

F. Scenic Resources and Unique Environments

Scenic Resources: Mendon's scenic resources include the areas previously mentioned as well as other areas. Old New England open fields and large rock walls are present on farms located along Quissett Road in the south-central part of town and Providence Road near the center of town and throughout the town.

There are 15 roads in Mendon that are designated "Scenic Roads" as seen in the Mendon Town Bylaws, Chapter XVI, Scenic Road Bylaw, allowed by the Scenic Roads Act, MGL Chapter 40, Section 15C. Roads are selected by their historic value, stonewalls and scenic beauty. All roads designated were voted on at a Mendon Town Meeting. Designating these roads helps to preserve the historic trees and stonewalls along these roads, as well as protect roadside scenic vistas. See the Map 5 - Unique Features Map to see where the roads are located.

The 15 roads that are designated as Scenic Roads as of 2014 include:

Asylum Street,

Bates Street (from Bellingham Street to the Bellingham town line),

Blackstone Street (from Lovell St. to the Blackstone town line),

Gaskill Street (terminating at George St. and Providence Street),

George Street (terminating at the Hopedale town line and Providence St.)

Inman Hill Road,

Miscoe Road (terminating at North Ave. to the end of the public way),

North Avenue (beginning and including the road adjacent to the power transmission lines [USGS Blackstone, MA, RI quadrant] and terminating at the Upton town line),

Park Street,

Pleasant Street,

Quissett Road (terminating at Providence St. to the end of the public right of way),

Southwick Street,

Thayer Road (terminating at Bates St. to the end of the public right of way),

Thornton Street

Trask Road (terminating at Hopedale St. to the end of the public right of way).

Over 250 buildings within Mendon have been identified as architecturally significant. These buildings are spread throughout the town. Historic districts have been established which include the Mendon Village and Lake Nipmuc. These districts are areas, which contain a relatively high density of historic structures or features. In 2005, eight new Scenic Roads were added to Mendon's Scenic Road Bylaw. This makes a total of 15 Scenic roads in Mendon. Designating these roads will help preserve the historic trees and stone walls along these roads, as well as protect roadside scenic vistas.

Geologic Features: Mendon has a very scenic ridgeline that runs north south along North Avenue. On a clear day, standing on North Avenue, one can see the tops of the tall buildings in Boston. There are hundreds of acres of open space that are in the view and they are included as "high priority" on the Required Map 8 – Action Plan Map. There is also a hill on the Inman Hill Wildlife Conservation Area where Boston can be seen on a clear day. The acreage is preserved.

As for preserving scenic vistas, this can be accomplished through an Upper Elevation Overlay District or Ridgeline Bylaw that requires a site plan review to minimize the visual intrusion of development for any development with an elevation of 350 feet above sea level. The Upper Elevation Overlay District Bylaw is a strategy that can protect these views and scenic vistas on Mendon's remote hillsides.

Steve Mabee, MA State Geologist reported that the state is not aware of any unusual geologic features. He also reported that Mendon is generally underlain by ~600 million year old granites that intruded the Blackstone Group, rocks that are much older than the granites. The granites are the Milford Granite and Northbridge Granite Gneiss. These granites were formed ~600 million years ago. These rocks, when they accreted to North America, forming Pangea, got put through the ringer and folded around like taffy, accounting for the spaghetti like map pattern of the rocks in the northern part of Mendon. The folds are large and complex and the axis of one of them, the Christian Hill Synform, passes right under Mendon. The Muddy and Mill Rivers flow in oddly straight north/northwest south/southeast lines. This is a sign that they are following fracture systems in the bedrock. We see fractures of this orientation in the general area. The valleys that these rivers flow through might be the traces of old faults, however, we have not found enough evidence in our field mapping to say yet that they are or aren't.

G. Environmental Challenges

Chapter 21E Sites: Under the Massachusetts General Laws. Chapter 21E sites are contaminated by oil or other hazardous material and are subject to special restrictions for redevelopment. Such sites are classified by tiers based on their level of contamination and their owner's compliance with regulations. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (Mass DEP) has a searchable database that lists 27 reportable spills of oil and/or hazardous materials in Mendon from 1990 through 2011. Most of those sites, including some former gas station sites, are classified in a status that poses no significant risk.

The most serious contamination of Mendon's groundwater occurred during the 1990's. An underground tank at O'Grady's Gas Station near the Hopedale line leaked a gasoline additive, MTBE, into the groundwater. The additive contaminated nearby wells and the only alternative in this case was to connect the approximately 20 affected houses to Town of Hopedale public water supply. A similar situation developed at a gas station on the corner of Main and Milford Streets but was caught before causing any widespread damage. Neither location is currently selling gas. A more recent contamination involves the former Gaskill's gas station located on the corner of Route 16 and Millville Road. According to Mark Baldi, Section Chief of the Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup, the comprehensive action to achieve a Permanent Solution involves stimulating the biodegradation of petroleum hydrocarbons by performing injections of a remedial additive called RegenOX. The latest remediation report was filed on July 7, 2010.

Another threat to the groundwater was the old town dump located off Bellingham Road. The Mendon Board of Health tried to close the dump when trailer truckloads of building debris were imported from the Boston area. This attempt to close the dump triggered a town wide controversy. A homeowner in proximity to the dump has reported contamination of his well. However, the Mendon Health Department reports that test results required by DEP show no contamination. It is highly unlikely that the surrounding acreage will be used for housing development.

A potentially significant environmental problem currently developing in the vicinity of Mendon is the construction of power plants in neighboring communities. These facilities may act to diminish the regional air quality as well as stress available water resources in the area. As a result, the importance of protecting currently available water and other environmental resources is all the more critical.

Invasive Plants: Land-based invasive species are a problem in Mendon as they are across the state. On preserved open space properties there is the typical invasive species in the open fields, such as Multiflora Rose, Asian Bittersweet and Japanese Knotweed. On the Meadow Brook Woods property, Japanese Knotweed was removed with the help of The Trustees of Reservations.

Water-based invasive plant species also occur in Mendon as they do statewide. Purple Loosestrife was rampant in the 85-acre Lake Nipmuc. The Lake Nipmuc Association organized a volunteer effort to remove the weeds and educated residents on the lake about the damage that the plant caused and to remove it even though it is beautiful. It is eradicated, but is monitored each year so that it does not grow back.

On the 9-acre Inman Pond located in the Meadow Brook Woods conservation area, there was been an effort to remove the invasive non-native water chestnut weeds that had infested the pond. CPA funds and TTOR funds were used to have Lycott Environmental mechanically remove literally tons of the weeds. They also handpicked the weeds along the edges. The town has organized volunteer handpicking to keep the weeds from re-infestation.

Flooding, Sedimentation and Erosion: Mendon has established a Flood Hazard Overlay District that includes new development and use regulations. This helps prevent building in areas that may pose a threat of flooding. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has mapped flood plains in Mendon. There are no developed areas in Mendon that chronically flood. Areas identified as Zone A flood areas (100-year flood zones) are limited to the immediate areas surrounding the larger surface water bodies in town. These areas include Lake Nipmuc and the lower portions of the Mill River as well as the wetland area associated with Long Meadow, in the northwest portion of town. Zone B flood areas (500-year flood zones) present in town are again limited to the immediate areas of smaller surface water bodies. Particularly, Zone B areas have been identified along Muddy and Spring Brooks as well as other scattered wetlands in town.

Mendon has passed some bylaws to help prevent flooding, sedimentation and erosion. Mendon passed a stormwater bylaw and this will ensure that all new roads will meet the guidelines in the bylaw to prevent stormwater water running into waterways. To prevent erosion in Mendon, the town passed a bylaw to prevent the removal of topsoil.

The Highway Department has been very conscious of this issue. They are preventing erosion by putting stones along the roads where sedimentation has been a problem and this has prevented the runoff from getting into the waterways. The Mendon Highway Department is also trying to improve the undersized culverts, which under heavy storm conditions could allow polluted water and soil in to the waterways.

Mendon has also held Low Impact Development (LID) workshops to encourage the committees and boards to follow LID practices.

Environmental Equity: The majority of Mendon's open space is located in towards the southern part of the town. However, there is easy access from all parts of town to the various open space areas. On Required Map 8 – Action Plan Map, the “areas of high priority” include the northern part of town also. Mendon has taken advantage of the neighboring towns open space areas and focused on expanding Mendon's open space in these areas in Mendon along the town borders. This includes land abutting the Town of Hopedale (North Avenue town-owned land and open space that is high priority for preservation), the Town of Uxbridge (Meadow Brook Woods) and the Town of Blackstone (Inman Hill Wildlife Area).

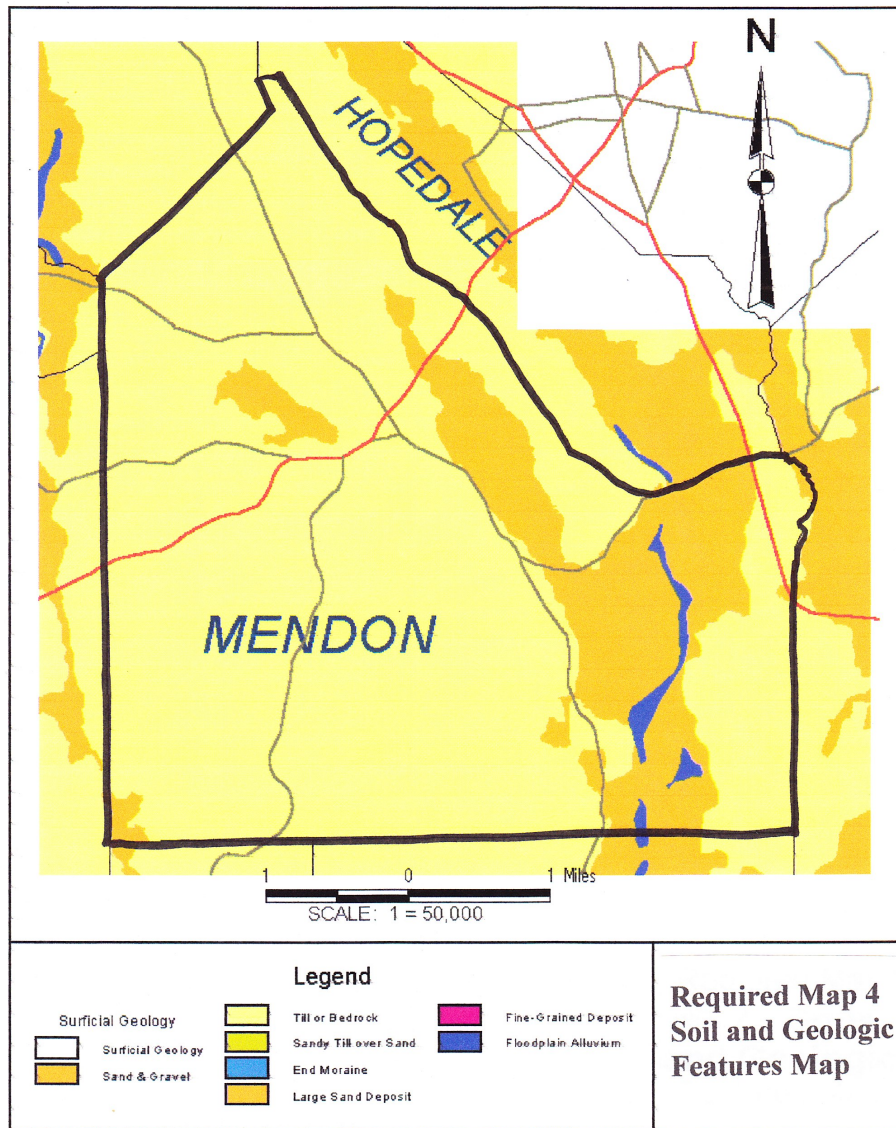
The recreations are located all through out town. However, the Memorial and Veterans' fields are located in the center of town on Millville Road, right off of Route 16. This area includes baseball, softball and soccer fields, tennis courts, a basketball court, town beach, playground, a walking track and the town summer camp. More sports fields are needed and several parcels of land are being considered for purchase.

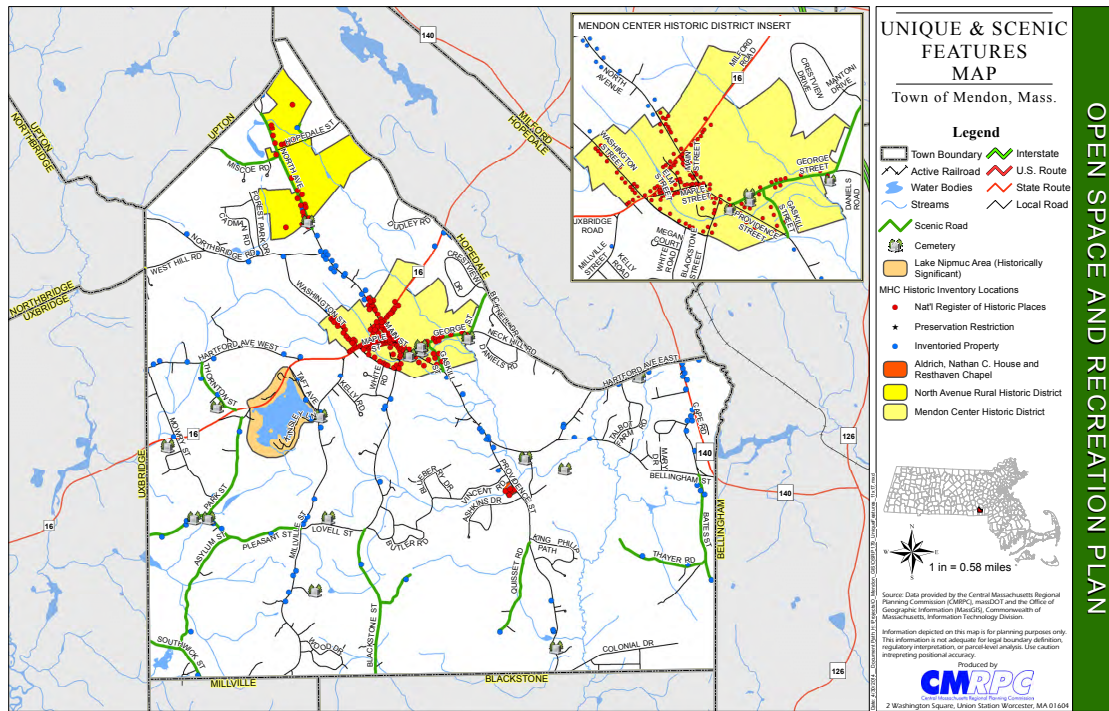
Required Map 4 – Soil and Geologic Features Map

Required Map 5 – Unique Features Map

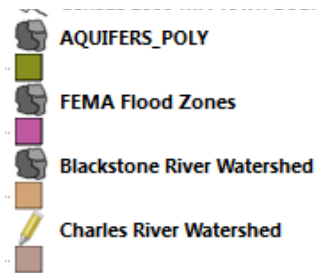
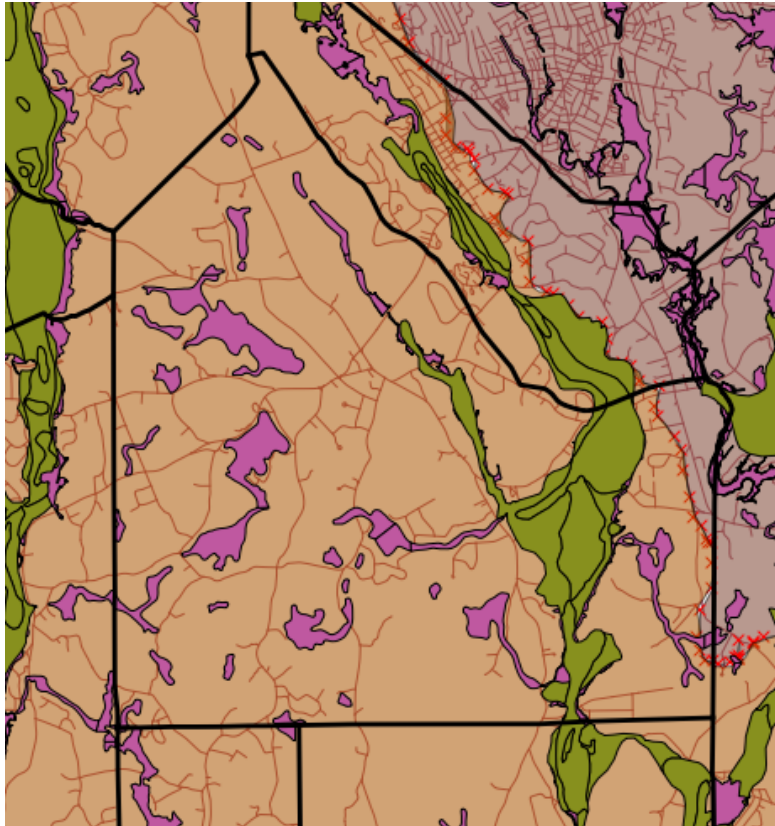
Required Map 6 – Water Resources Map

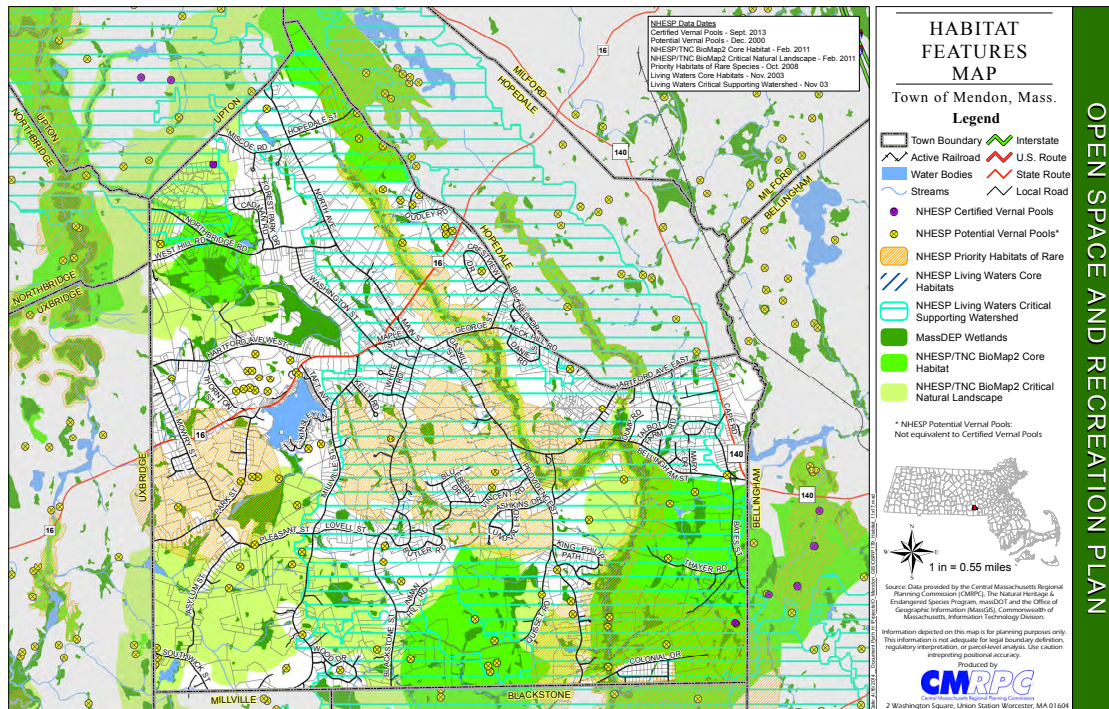
Required Map 4 - Soil and Geologic Features Map





Required Map 6 - Water Resources Map





Section 5 – Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest

One of the strongest indications on the Master Plan survey was that town residents want to preserve open space. 74% of the respondents on the Master Plan survey said they favor purchasing open space for conservation, with 41% wanting the town to purchase the land without increasing taxes and 33% willing to increase taxes to preserve open space. This is consistent with various surveys done in Mendon over the past two decades.

Forty-seven percent of the survey respondents feel that not enough is being done to protect open space and provide recreational facilities. Thirty-nine percent are satisfied or very satisfied with the land preservation and providing recreation. This seems to indicate that more land preservation and recreational facilities are desired. Voters will most likely confirm this through positive town meetings votes, if the past is an indication of the future.

One item that town residents and various sports clubs have brought up over and over is the need for more sports fields. This has come to the attention of the Community Preservation Committee, Land Use Committee, Select Board and Park Commissioners. This has also been mentioned in many surveys.

There were 580 comments on the survey and most of them centered on liking Mendon because of the “rural setting,” “historic and scenic” features in town, “open space,” “location” and it is peaceful and quiet.

There are several reasons that preserving open space and areas for passive and active recreation are important.

- One is that Mendon has a high percentage of environmentally significant land. Mendon contains a good portion of land that is designated BioMap2 Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscape, which can be seen on the Land Matrix. Unfortunately, in the northwest section of town, building is encroaching on Core Habitat and Mendon residents do not want to see that happen in other areas of town.
- Two is that numerous studies show that it is more cost effective for a town to purchase open space than to have residential housing built on the land. Homeowners require more town services than open space or agricultural land. In Mendon, the new houses that are being built typically have 4 bedrooms and the new residents are bringing in more children. In 2011, the Land Use Committee calculated that approximately each new home built costs the town over \$9,129 each year, because the taxes paid by these new households do not cover the cost of services required by the household. It is mainly the impact of educating children.
- Three is that Mendon's history is based on a rural agricultural past and the town would like to continue to "cultivate" this character in Mendon.
- Four is that the open space and recreational facilities provide for healthy active and passive recreational activities including hiking, biking, cross-country skiing, camping, hunting, active sport recreation, swimming and exercise in playgrounds. Most of the people who live in Mendon choose Mendon as a home because of its open spaces. Once they move here with their families, many residents with children are looking for activities and get involved with sports and request more active recreational services.

Definitions of Protection: Open space is a parcel of undeveloped land, usually 10+ acres. Recreation land can be less and refers to sports fields, sports courts, beaches and playgrounds. Below are levels of protection. These lands are eligible for a significant tax break.

SHORT-TERM PROTECTION

Massachusetts General Law Chapter 61, 61A and 61B is a tax classification for lands under private ownership. This classification enables the lands to be taxed at their use value rather than their full market value and provides temporary protection for open space:

Chapter 61: Owners with parcels of more than 10 acres are eligible for a ten-year forest management plan. In exchange for filing a plan with the Department of Environmental Management, these parcels are exempted from 90% of the regular property tax due on that land for a ten-year period. The Town is also entitled to 8% of any commercially sold forest products harvested from that parcel.

Chapter 61A: Productive agricultural lands. Tax exemptions vary dependent on crop valuation. Participation in this program should be encouraged as the tax break can provide enough of an incentive for agriculture to be maintained and preserved.

Chapter 61B: Lands of at least five contiguous acres that are used for recreational activities. Recreational uses may include hiking, camping, nature study, hunting, and skiing.

The landowner can opt to remove the property from Chapter 61 but is required to pay the last 5 years of rollback taxes. Unless the land will continue in agricultural use for at least five consecutive years, the landowner must offer the town the right of first refusal.

The Town has only 120 days to execute this "first refusal" clause.

Article 97 is an amendment to the MA Constitution. It protects lands owned by the Commonwealth, cities and towns that were designated for the purpose of open space preservation or recreation. According to the statute, "Lands and easements taken or acquired for such purposes

shall not be used for other purposes or otherwise disposed of except by laws enacted by a two thirds vote, taken by yeas and nays, of each branch of the general court."

Having another layer of protection on properties, such as a conservation restriction (CR), is a good practice to protect lands in perpetuity.

LONG-TERM PROTECTION

A conservation restriction (CR) is a form of land preservation where the landowner who wants to protect his property from ever being developed while still maintaining ownership of the property. This can be an ideal solution for Mendon landowners who want to permanently protect their property. Contrary to popular opinion, a deed restriction does not protect a property in perpetuity. A conservation restriction on the use of the property, however, does ensure that it will never be developed.

Land placed under a CR can remain private or can be open to the public. The CR can allow for farming and passive recreation and, depending upon the circumstances, even small parcels of 5 acres or less can be eligible. The CR can be placed upon the property and must be held by a third party, such as a land trust or a town's conservation commission, if the town does not own the property. In the case where the Town is the owner of the property, the CR should be held by a land trust or similar entity. The third party monitors the property in perpetuity.

Another long-term protection is land owned by a land trust.

A. Private Parcels

The private parcels of special interest are listed on the **Land Matrix Chart** and on **Required Map 7 – Open Space Inventory Map**. There are many landowners with large properties that would be valuable as public open space or recreation areas. Mendon has forested areas, open fields from the old farms and many wetlands that create a beautiful, diverse and healthy habitat for wildlife and humans. The Land Use Committee in Mendon monitors these ecologically rich lands for future preservation and watches for properties that are practically located for sports fields. The Land Use Committee is currently working with several landowners to employ cost effective land preservation strategies, such as conservation restrictions and outright land donations.

Mendon has a significant amount of land under Chapter 61, 61A and 61B. This status currently applies to 2798 acres on 93 separate parcels owned by approximately 33 individuals or trusts. While several parcels are less than one acre, six landowners have combined parcel totals of between 100 and 200 acres, and one has almost 700 acres.

This land is privately owned and only under short-term protection, however the town has taken advantage of their right-of-first-refusal powers to protect three noteworthy properties. Two of the properties, the 96-acre Kelly Farm and the 14-acre Paddock property helped the Town complete a contiguous tract of 800 acres of protected open space. The third piece of Chapter 61A land the Town purchased was the 78-acre Fino property. The Town used Community Preservation Funds to purchase a 24-acre portion of the Fino property to save as open space. This parcel connects to hundreds of acres of unprotected open space, has Muddy River flowing through the property, which is BioMap2 Core Habitat, and contains an open field that is one of the first landscapes seen when driving into Mendon.

Purchasing land is one method of preservation, which can be costly. However, sometimes it is the only way to protect key properties is outright purchase. CPA funds and grants have been essential in land preservation projects in Mendon. The Land Use Committee is working to utilize several other methods. Conservation restrictions (CR) are a good method to preserve open space for less money. With CRs, the landowner can continue to live on the land, but the town or a land trust or other non-profit buys the development rights to permanently preserve the rest of the land the owners are not living on.

Another method is finding conservation buyers. This can be a very cost effective way to preserve land. In this case an owner is found to buy a large tract of land, but only builds on a small portion of the property, while permanently preserving the rest of the property.

Another important aspect is to work with large landowners with philanthropic intent to accept donations of land. Another method is partial development of a purchased open space to recoup some of the purchase costs.

The Land Use Committee also has a strong network of contacts with land trusts, estate and tax lawyers, state and local officials, donors, as well as other experts to learn about new methods of land preservation, grant availability and current legislation. The Land Use Committee, through the information in the OSRP, has set priorities as to what land is most valuable to the town and focuses on preserving these properties for open space or active recreation. Since the Committee has used this well thought out tactic, almost every vote to preserve land or improve active recreation areas in the last five years has passed through with unanimous approval of the voters (or very close to unanimous).

B. Public and Non-Profit Parcels

The public parcels are also noted on the **Matrix** and on **Required Map 7 – Open Space Inventory Map**. As mentioned above, several of the private parcels have become public. Another private parcel, the 150-acre town-owned Wood property, was also purchased with the help of the Metacomet Land Trust, a private donor and the Massachusetts Department of Fisheries and Wildlife. This property, along with the town-owned Kelly and town-owned Paddock properties mentioned above, also helped to complete an 800-acre tract of contiguous, protected open space. On this tract of land the Land Use Committee is working with the Bay State Trail Riders Association who is clearing cart paths to develop a trail system on these properties. This area is now called the Inman Wildlife Conservation Area and it contains BioMap 2 Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscapes.

Similarly, The former Chaleki property and Nolet property equaling 76 acres are now preserved open space that abuts other open space. This area is called Meadow Brook Woods. Meadow Brook Woods contains BioMap 2 Critical Natural Landscapes.

The Land Use Committee has also worked with a forester to develop forest stewardship plans for the Town owned properties. Mendon Boy Scouts have camped several times in the Inman Wildlife Conservation Area. After the stewardship plan was developed, the Boy Scouts worked with the forester to blaze the borders of the property and perform wildlife cutting of trees to create nesting sites for birds and mammals. Mendon Boy Scouts have also cleared trails, fixed a cabin and done other maintenance work on the Meadow Brook Woods property. Volunteers and the Bay State Trail Riders Association have also been very helpful on these two properties working on various projects, including trail clearing and the removal of invasive plants.

With the many new families with young children, the need for public recreation areas and sports teams continues to increase. The Park Commissioners have utilized land that the town already

owned and has either upgraded facilities, such as replacing the old playground using CPA funds for materials and volunteers for construction. The Park Commissioners have also developed town-owned land by Memorial Field to construct Veteran's Field, which includes a multipurpose field and two baseball/softball fields and a track with exercise stations that was built off of the current Memorial sports field.

An ADA Consultant evaluated all the areas for active recreation and the Mendon ADA Coordinator is taking steps to make changes where necessary. He has presented the plans to the Community Preservation Committee and a schedule of funding is being developed to improve each of the areas that need improvement. At the June 2013 Annual Town Meeting, funds were approved to make the Memorial Field and Veteran's Field accessible through new walkway construction.

The open space parcels are rocky and hilly and to not lend themselves to access by a wheelchair without ruining the integrity of the open space. However, there are areas that wheelchairs could access some locations that the town has not preserved, but link to some of the current open space parcels. These parcels are being observed for future purchase.

Land Matrix Chart

Private Parcels										
Owner	Managing Agency	Use	Condition	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Grants	Zoning	Protection	Acres	Comments
5, 6 & 10 Southwick St.	owners	Ch 61	NA	high	Yes/no	NA	Residential	Ch 61	173	CoreHab 2 CritNatLand 2
45-1 Asylum St	owners	none	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	None	17	CritNatLand 2
28 Asylum St	owners	none	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	None	24	CritNatLand 2
12 Asylum St		none	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	None	24	CritNatLand 2
49, 51, 57, 62-1, 69 Hartford Ave West & 11-1 West Hill Rd, 9 & 63 Old Saw Mill Rd	owners	Ch 61	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	136	CoreHab 2 CritNatLand 2
46 Miscoe Rd	owners	Ch 61	NA	medium	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	17	CritNatLand 2
102 North Ave	owners	Ch 61	NA	medium	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	39	
192 Millville St	owners	Ch 61B	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	35	CritNatLand 2
13 Leonard Rd	owners	Ch 61B	NA	medium	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	20	CritNatLand 2
158 North Ave & 31 Miscoe Rd	owners	Ch 61B	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	60	CritNatLand 2
153 Blackstone St	owners	Ch 61B	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	53	CritNatLand 2
169A Blackstone St	owners	Ch 61B	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	12	CritNatLand 2
27 Park St	owners	Ch 61B	NA	medium	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	37	
40 Northbridge St	owners	Ch 61B	NA	medium	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	13	
35 & 37 Hartford Ave East	owners	Ch 61A	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	27	CoreHab 2 CritNatLand 2

Private Parcels										
Owner	Managing Agency	Use	Condition	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Grants	Zoning	Protection	Acres	Comments
30, 34, 36, 39 & 46 Thayer Rd and 192 Providence St	owners	Ch 61A	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	198	CoreHab 2 CritNatLand 2
21 Northbridge St	owners	Ch 61A	NA	medium	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	16	
3 Tower Rd	owners	Ch 61A	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	20	CritNatLand 2
23, 27, 50 & 53 Pleasant St and 40 & 42 Park St	owners	Ch 61A	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	106	CritNatLand 2
14 & 15 Thornton St	owners	Ch 61A	NA	medium	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	44	
69 Park St	owners	Ch 61A	NA	medium	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	14	

36 Miscoe	owners	Ch 61A	NA	medium	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	52	CritNatLand 2
52, 73 & 75 Providence St	owners	Ch 61A	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	130	CoreHab 2 CritNatLand 2
42 & 43 Quisset Rd	owners	Ch 61A	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	112	CoreHab 2 CritNatLand 2
133, 136, 139, 143 & 144 Millville St	owners	Ch 61A	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	52	CritNatLand 2
161 Millville St	owners	none	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	48	CritNatLand 2
48 Kinsley Ln, 79 Millville St and 17 Pleasant St	owners	none	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	97	CritNatLand 2
18 & 25 Pleasant St.	owners	Ch 61A	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	60	
6, 8 & 9 Trask Rd	owners	Ch 61A	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	65	CoreHab 2 CritNatLand 2
101, 109 & 113 North Ave	owners	Ch 61A	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	121	CoreHab 2 CritNatLand 2

Private Parcels

Owner	Managing Agency	Use	Condition	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Grants	Zoning	Protection	Acres	Comments
21, 23 & 25 Lovell St	owners	Ch 61A	NA	medium	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	27	
44, 53, 57, 67, 69, 77 & 78 Bates St and 53, 59 & 61 Bellingham St. and 125, Hartford Ave East and 125, 128 & 142 Providence St and 57, 62 & 72 Thayer Rd.	owners	Ch 61A	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	688	CoreHab 2 CritNatLand 2
12 Gaskill St, 14 George St, 24, 32, 34, 36 & 38 Main St and 15 Milford St	owners	Ch 61A	NA	high	No	NA	Residential	Ch 61	124	CoreHab 2
8 Megan Ct	owners	Recreation	NA	high	Yes/no fee	None	Residential	None	5	
188 Providence St	owners	Open Space	NA	high	No	None	Residential	CR held by Metacomet Land Trust	14	CoreHab 2 CritNatLand 2

Public & Non-Profit Parcels										
Owner	Managing Agency	Use	Condition	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Grants	Zoning	Protection	Acres	Comments
Town of Mendon										
Memorial Field 29 Milville St	Park Commissioners	Recreation	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	None	Residential	Article 97	6.25	sports fields, playground, tennis, basketball
Mendon Woods 4 Taft Ave	Park Commissioners	Recreation	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	Donation	Residential	Article 97	12	open space
Veteran's Field 25 Milville St	Park Commissioners	Recreation	Good to Excellent	Medium	Yes	None	Residential	Article 97	8.83	sports fields and walking path
Town Beach 45-47 Taft Ave	Park Commissioners	Recreation	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	None	Residential	Article 97	0.31	swimming & recreation
Island in Lake Nipmuc 78 Lake Nipmuc	Park Commissioners	Recreation	Good to Excellent	Medium	Yes	None	Residential	Article 97	0.75	not used
Grover Field 10 Colonial Dr.	Park Commissioners	Recreation	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	None	Residential	Article 97	3.86	soccer field
Founders Park 1 Main St	Park Commissioners	Recreation	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	None	Business	Article 97	1	historic site
3 North Ave	Select Board	Recreation Potential	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	None	Business	Future Municipal Use	21	
Inman Hill Wildlife Conservation Area 69 Inman Hill Rd	Conservation Commission	Open Space	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	None	Residential	Open space or future municipal use	14	Former Paddock Property CoreHab 2 CritNatLand 2
Inman Hill Wildlife Conservation Area 53 Quissett Rd	Conservation Commission	Open Space	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	MA Fish & Wildlife & Donation	Residential	CR held by MA Fish & Wildlife	150	Former Wood Property CoreHab 2 CritNatLand 2
Inman Hill Wildlife Conservation Area - 15, 16, 26 & 33 Inman Hill Rd	Conservation Commission	Open Space	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	None	Residential	Open space or future municipal use	96	Former Kelly Farm CoreHab 2 CritNatLand 2
MA Fish & Wildlife										
Inman Hill Wildlife Conservation Area 56,58 66 Quissett Rd	MA Fish & Wildlife	Open Space	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	MA Fish & Wildlife	Residential	Article 97	168	CoreHab 2 CritNatLand 2

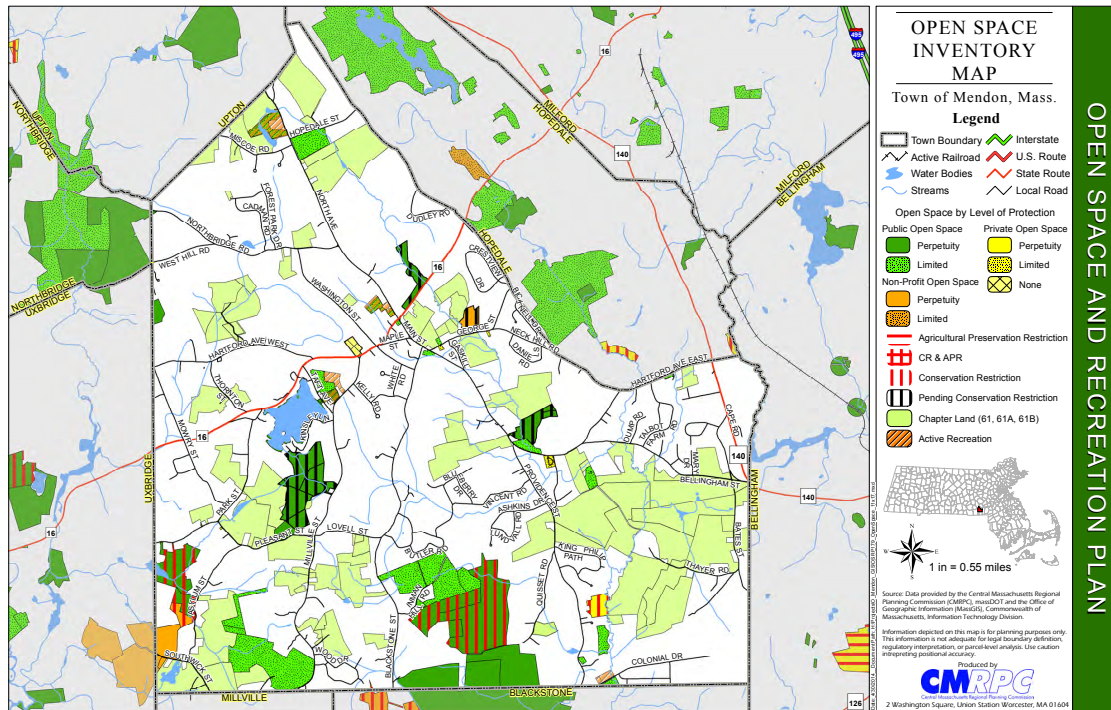
Cemeteries										
Owner	Managing Agency	Use	Condition	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Grants	Zoning	Protection	Acres	Comments
Swandale Cemetery Asso.										
Swandale Cemetery 15 Hartford Ave East	Swandale Cemetery Association	Cemetery	Good	No	Yes		Residential	NA	4.23	1820 - present
Friends or Quaker Cemetery 7 George Street	Swandale Cemetery Association	Cemetery	Good	No	Yes		Residential	NA	1	1729 - 1850 Quaker
Privately Owned										
Hartford Mills Cemetery 797-897 Hartford Ave East	owner	Cemetery	?	No	No		Residential	NA	?	family cemetery unable to find
Locust Hill Cemetery between 90a North Ave	Not sure, but Parks mows	Cemetery	Good	no	No		Residential	NA	143 x 115	elaborate cast iron taft memorial and bench
Taft/LaMothe Cemetery 160 Millville Street	owner	Cemetery	Good	No	No		Residential	NA	81 x 25	
Pleasant St. or Taft Cemetery 64 Pleasant Street	owner	Cemetery	Fair	No	No		Residential	NA	75 x 75	markers are DeBrie and Albbe
Mowry St. Cemetery Mowry St./Rt. 16 (behind Howley's Garage)	owner	Cemetery	Poor	No	No		Residential	NA	20 x 10	stone marked Mowry Ron Champney
Thayer (Thornton) Cemetery 10 Thornton Street	owner	Cemetery	Good	No	No		Residential	NA	20 x 20	need a release owned by Dec
Union Freeman Cemetery behind 18 Lovell Street	owner	Cemetery	?	no	No		Residential	NA		

Cemeteries										
Owner	Managing Agency	Use	Condition	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Grants	Zoning	Protection	Acres	Comments
Town of Mendon										
Bicknell Cemetery 113 Hartford Ave East	Select Board Parks Dept mows	Cemetery	Fair to Good	No	Yes		Residential	NA	1.02	Badly needs maintenance, trees, weeds
Park St. or Daniels Cemetery 73 Park St.	Select Board Parks Dept mows	Cemetery	Good to Excellent	No	Yes		Residential	NA	0.103	well kept
George Cemetery 8 George Street	Select Board Parks mows	Cemetery	Good	No	Yes		Residential	NA	1.36	1850s cut granite retaining wall
Pine Hill Cemetery 218 Providence Road	Select Board Parks Dept mows	Cemetery	Good	No	Yes		Residential	NA	1.71	1700s
Gaskill Cemetery 35 George Street	Select Board	Cemetery	Good	No	Yes		Residential	NA	0.496	nice cast iron gate
Wood Cemetery 07 Hartford Ave West near Thornton St.	Select Board	Cemetery	Good to Excellent	No	Yes		Residential	NA	5	
Cook Cemetery 15 Thayer Road	Select Board	Cemetery	Poor	No	Yes		Residential	NA	7.88	Land Locked - adjacent property 61A CoreHab 2
Old or Revolutionary War Cemetery 35 Main St. & 1 Providence St.	Select Board Parks Dept mows	Cemetery	Good	No	Yes		Residential	NA	2.15	Gravestones back to the 1600s

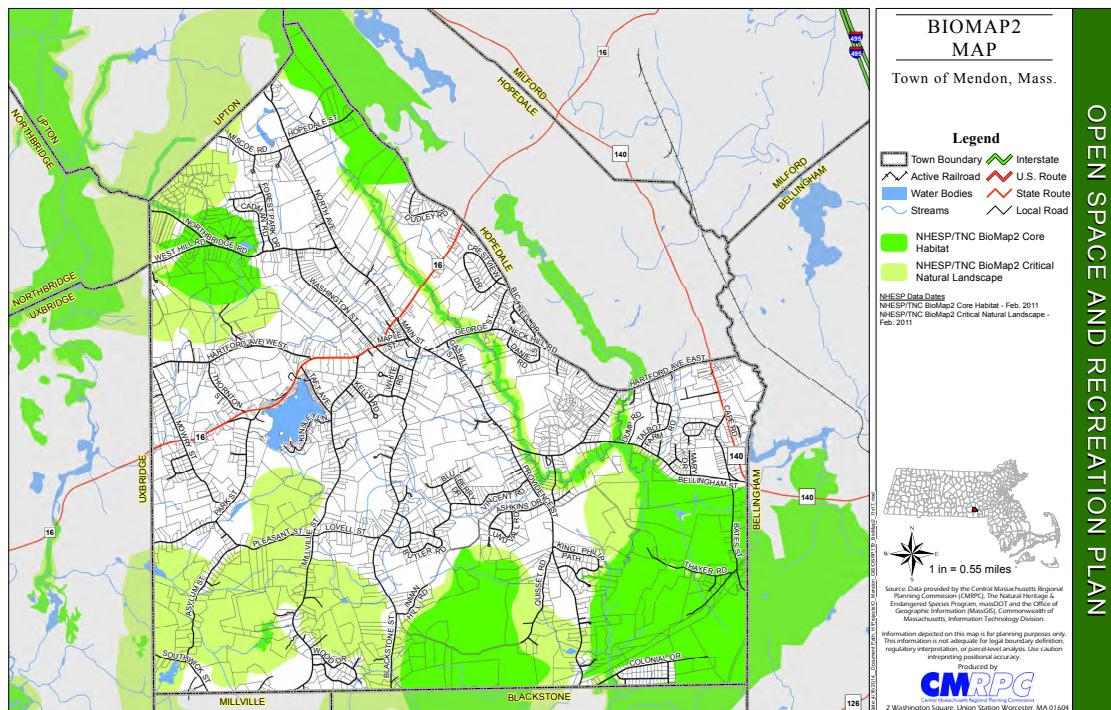
Public & Non-Profit Parcels										
Owner	Managing Agency	Use	Condition	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Grants	Zoning	Protection	Acres	Comments
The Trustees of Reservations										
Cormier Woods Reservation - 41 Asylum St & 16 Southwick St	Trustees of Reservations	Open Space	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	MA Partnership Grant	Residential	TTOR Land Trust	41	Abuts Meadow Brook Woods CoreHab 2 CritNatLand 2
Town of Mendon										
Town Forest 203 Millville St	Conservation Commission	Open Space	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	None	Residential	Article 97	119	CoreHab 2 CritNatLand 2
Town Forest 173 & 173A Millville St	Conservation Commission	Open Space	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	Donation	Residential	Article 97	26	Former LaMothe Property CoreHab 2 CritNatLand 2
13 Pleasant St	Conservation Commission	Open Space	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	None	Residential	Article 97	14	CritNatLand 2
School District										
MiscoeHillSchool - 148 North Ave	School District	Recreation	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	None	Residential	School	27	sports fields
CloughElemSchool - 10 North Ave	School District	Recreation	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	None	Residential	School	9	sports fields
Former Cox property 34 George St PENDING	Conservation Commission	Open Space	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	Donation	Residential	CR Metacomet Land Trust pending	24	CoreHab 2 CR held by Metacomet Land Trust - PENDING
Abbreviations CoreHab2 = BioMap2 Core Habitat CritNatLand2 = BioMap2 Critical Natural Landscape CR = conservation restriction										

Public & Non-Profit Parcels										
Owner	Managing Agency	Use	Condition	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Grants	Zoning	Protection	Acre	Comments
Town of Mendon										
Meadow Brook Woods 100 Park St	Conservation Commission	Open Space	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	MA LAND Grant & CPA	Residential	CR held by TTOR	61	Former Chaleki Property CritNatLand 2
Meadow Brook Woods - 39 Asylum St	Conservation Commission	Open Space	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	CPA	Residential	CR held by TTOR	16	Former Nolet Property CritNatLand 2
Meadow Brook Uplands 79 Millville St, 17 Pleasant St. & 48 Kinsley Ln.	Conservation Commission	Open Space	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	MA LAND Grant & CPA	Residential	CR held by Metacomet Land Trust Pending	97	Former Gannett Property CritNatLand 2
131 North Ave	Select Board	Open Space / agriculture	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	Donation	Residential	Article 97	30	Former Gannett property
Muddy Brook North Conservation Area 20 Milford St	Conservation Commission	Open Space	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	CPA	Business	CR held by Metacomet Land Trust - pending	24	Former Fino Property CoreHab 2
Muddy Brook South Conservation Area 74 Providence St	Conservation Commission	Open Space	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	CPA	Residential	CR held by Metacomet Land Trust - pending	27	Former Paddock Property CoreHab 2 CritNatLand 2
Muddy Brook South Conservation Area 15 Puffer Dr	Conservation Commission	Open Space	Good to Excellent	High	Yes	Donation	Residential	CR Metacomet Land Trust - pending	4	Donated from the Cobbler's Knoll Subdivision
Town of Mendon Open Space 26 Hartford Ave. East	Select Board	Open Space	Good	High	Yes	Donation	Residential	Article 97	7.74	Donated from the Cobbler's Knoll Subdivision

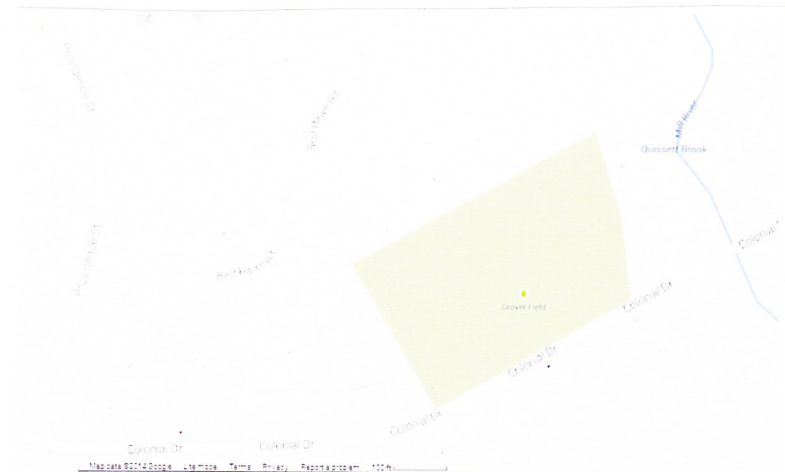
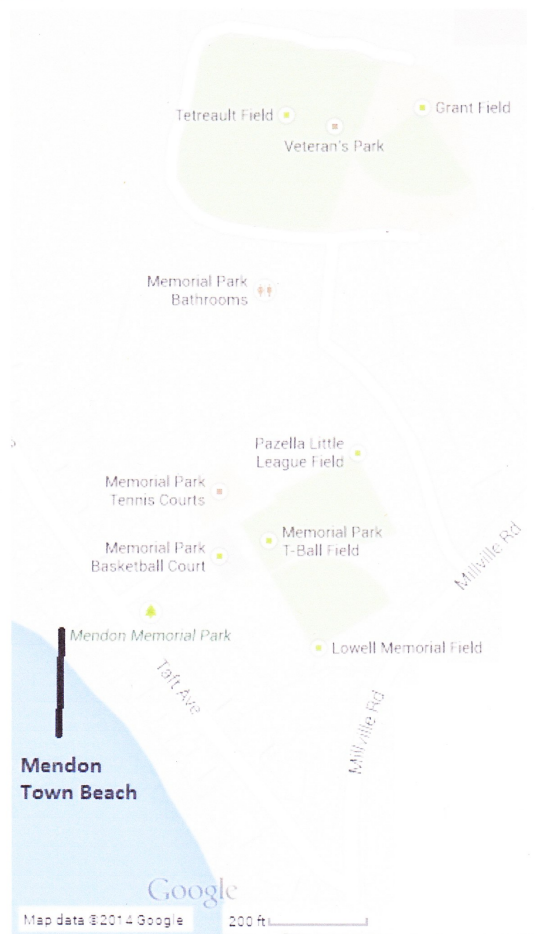
Map 7 - Open Space Inventory Map



Map 7a - BioMap2



Map 7b – Sports Fields Map



Section 6 – Community Vision

A. Description of Process

The Land Use Committee balanced the information from the community; the experience and expertise of the various town boards, and a survey distributed through the Mendon Master Plan Committee to develop the 2013-20 Mendon Open Space And Recreation Plan.

As mentioned in section 2, one source of data was the town-wide survey conducted by the Master Plan Committee. This has been a long-term ongoing process through a series of meetings and public forums. The surveys were mailed out on July 21, 2011 to 2163 households and 34% were returned, giving a good sampling from the Mendon residents. Dozens of meetings have been held to develop the Master Plan with open space and recreation being two key areas in the report.

The Central MA Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) facilitated the most recent public meeting on open space, which was held on June 20, 2013. It was small group of 20 and as has been repeated in countless other surveys, meetings and reports over the last 20 years, the residents were predictably and overwhelmingly in favor of the open space, scenic views, and rural character. CMRPC put a graph up on the screen that showed that 73% of Mendon land was undeveloped and 17% was in agriculture. It was agreed that Mendon should continue acquiring open space. It was agreed that there were economic values with preserving open space, such as the considerable tax savings in preventing residential construction, money spent by outdoor enthusiasts and, once the Town Forest is on track, Mendon as a tourist destination. It was also discussed to have a mandatory Open Space Communities Bylaw and an Upper Elevation Bylaw.

We also used information from the CMRPC's Blackstone Valley Prioritization Project. Members of various committees also participated in several meetings participating in the process of developing the Blackstone Valley Prioritization Project Report.

An ongoing source of information from the public was the annual assessment of the Land Use Committee's Five-Year Action Plan, which is a direct reflection of the OSRP goals. Each year, for the past five years, the Five-Year Action Plan has been approved at the Mendon Annual Town Meeting and vote has been unanimous. The Land Use Committee is in close contact with the other town committees requesting input and keeping them updated on open space and recreation projects. Articles have also been written in the *Mendon-Upton Town Crier* newspaper, which is sent to every home in Mendon on the various projects and meetings.

B. Statement of Open Space and Recreation Goals

Mendon still has productive farmlands, scenic vistas, wildlife corridors and an overall country "feel." It possesses the qualities of a hilltop farm community with its open fields, historical buildings and 300-year old cemeteries. However, the residential population is growing. Mendon's historic and natural beauty has drawn many people to Mendon increasing the need to protect the last gems of open space.

Seventy-four of the respondents of the Master Plan survey wanted to purchase open space, with 33% willing to pay higher taxes and 41% not wanting to pay higher taxes. Forty percent were satisfied or very satisfied with the protection of the town's natural resources and providing recreation, while 48% were not satisfied with either. This could reflect that many people are

pleased with the land preservation efforts, which have been seen by the unanimous or nearly unanimous votes in the purchases for open space parcels and recreation projects, but residents would like to see more of these projects.

The Central MA Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) facilitated the most recent public meeting on open space for the Master Plan, which was held on June 20, 2013. It was small group of 20 and as has been repeated in countless other surveys, meetings, reports and in informal discussions over the last 20 years, the residents were predictably and overwhelmingly in favor of the open space, scenic views, and rural character. A couple, who moved here two months ago, cited this as the reason for their move to Mendon. This comment is echoed by many Mendon residents.

Land conservation and protection of natural resources was a high priority in the Master Plan Survey. Several people also commented that they wanted to protect open space in the most cost-effective way possible, indicating that the Land Use Committee and the Town of Mendon need to look for creative and collaborative ways to preserve land.

Although the town has been upgrading the trails on the open space, improving the water quality in Lake Nipmuc and Inman Pond through weed removal, water testing and a new Septic Management Program, there is a lot more that needs to be done in the next seven years. The same holds true for the active recreation areas, which need further improvement, upgrade and expansion to meet the needs of Mendon's growing community. The Park Commissioners have expanded the park programs and recreational facilities for Mendon over the past five years, but see many projects that still need to be done.

Growth and development in Mendon are inevitable; however the Town of Mendon needs to continue to be an active player in the process. Growth needs to be planned long range so that land preservation becomes a reality, and not an afterthought that becomes a regret over land not protected, especially since Mendon has such a high concentration of BioMap 2 Core Habitat and Critical natural Landscape. Recreational needs need to be met without impacting the natural resources in a negative manner.

Section 7 – Analysis of Needs

A. Summary of Resource Protection Needs

The pressure for development in Mendon is ever growing. Below are several sources of data to support this point.

- With the connection of the Mass. Pike and Route 146 and the suburbs outside of Boston reaching their build-out limits, Mendon becomes more desirable for development each day.
- Channel Five's Chronicle on October 3, 2005 highlighted Mendon as the new growth area because of its open land and its affordable housing as compared to the towns closer to Boston. This trend continues in 2013.
- Sprawl is a serious issue in Mendon. In the Mass Audubon's November 2003 report, Losing Ground: At What Cost, Mendon was listed as 10th out of the 351 towns and cities

in Massachusetts in being designated as a *Sprawl Hot Spot*. This designation as a sprawl hot spot confirms what the Mendon townspeople have been witnessing. Ten years later, large lots are still the vast majority of residential growth in Mendon.

- The houses, lawns and lots are getting bigger and adding to the destruction of wildlife habitats and making it more expensive to protect these habitats.

All of the development pressure with young families brings children whose families desire active recreation facilities.

The Massachusetts's BioMap 2 has indicated the valuable wildlife habitats that exist in Mendon. Many large contiguous parcels of open space that are currently privately owned contain large areas *Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscape* as designated by the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program's BioMap 2.

Data supports the need to protect land and land conservation is a high interest to Mendon residents according to the Master Plan Survey results, town meeting votes over the last five years and from the information collected from Mendon's town committees, boards and reports.

Massachusetts's BioMap 2 shows that the beauty of Mendon's open space, which Mendon residents appreciate, also holds a critical mass of land that has high ecological value. Protecting large greenways of land will provide wildlife corridors, scenic beauty and protection of natural resources as well as areas that can be productive in agriculture. The Land Use Committee needs to continue to use the MassGIS mapping system to help guide the town as to what privately owned land is worth buying for open space, wildlife corridors, potential trails and areas for active recreation.

With the Mendon Agricultural Commission getting its feet on the ground, they can also contribute to preserving the farms in Mendon and encourage the return back to working farms to preserve the land and also offer Mendon residents fresh local food.

All of the land preservation efforts and purchases should have an eye to the connections between the properties. The wetlands and waterways should also be worked in to the preservation to insure good water quality for residents and prime water resources for wildlife.

There is increasing pressure to protect land that is getting more and more expensive. Since there are still many acres of open space to protect in Mendon, more funding for land preservation will need to be raised. This funding needs to be stretched and used efficiently, therefore, the Town of Mendon needs to continue to find opportunities to creatively preserve land that are not as costly as outright purchase of land.

B. Summary of Community's Needs

From the Census information in 2000 to 2010, the Mendon population grew by 20 %, with 23% of the population children 18 years or younger. This supports the need for more sports fields and the continual requests by parents. Since the Town of Upton has similar needs and many of the teams include Mendon and Upton kids, both towns should combine forces to coordinate efforts to make the best possible use of sports fields.

Special interest groups voiced concerns. The Cemetery Commissioners continue to alert the Select Board to the fact that the space for burial is getting used up and more space is needed. Mendon should consider this need when planning land purchases for open space or recreation. Land that is appropriate has not become available in the past five years; however this issue needs to be addressed.

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for Massachusetts also refers to the “suburban growth explosion,” of which Mendon is feeling the pressure. It also states that the preservation of open space and building of recreational facilities has not kept up with the need of the growing population.

The Park Commissioners and the Select Board are aware of the need to accommodate people with special needs. The ADA Consultant reports provided the town with excellent suggestions for improvements and these will be considered with the new and old projects. This is reflected in the ADA Transition Plan.

One issue that needs to be addressed with the protection of land and may increase as a problem with the development of the trail system is the issue of motorized vehicles on trails. There have been complaints to the Mendon Police and the Mendon Land Use Committee. Efforts need to be made to consider this factor when maintaining and monitoring the open space areas. Monitoring of the motorized vehicles on the trails is extremely difficult, but efforts need to continue to curb the illegal use of off highway vehicles. This is an issue that the Town of Mendon has to carefully work through.

Mendon also needs to provide affordable housing. Continued efforts need to be made through use of CPA funds, bylaw changes and looking for creative opportunities to provide Mendon affordable housing and keeping the community a well balanced population.

C. Management Needs Potential Change of Use

Communication between town boards and committees is essential. There are several issues that the town boards need to work together on to avoid haphazard development. Unfortunately, Mendon has not had a town manager for several years. This has put a lot of pressure on the volunteers and the employees of the town.

One feature that has mitigated the lack of a town manager and fostered good communication between boards is that two of the committees that work on open space and recreation projects have good representation on those boards. The Land Use Committee has representatives from the following town committees: Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen, Planning Board and two Members-at-Large. Similarly, the Community Preservation Committee has representatives from the following town committees: Historical Commission, Planning Board, Mendon Housing Authority, Conservation Commission, Park Commissioners and a Member-at-Large. This overlapping of boards has greatly increased communication.

In 2014, the Select Board worked actively with the Finance Committee to figure out a way to hire a Town Administrator. This should help to reduce miscommunication, prevent duplication of services and improve efficiency. Mendon is extremely fortunate to have a thriving volunteer base, buffeted by the funding of open space and recreation projects through the CPA funds, which carried the town through years without a Town Administrator.

A step in the right direction to help prevent sprawling development was the enactment of Open Space Communities Bylaw. This allows builders to construct homes on smaller lots as long as they set aside a minimum of 55% of the land towards open space. Most or all of the land needs to be open space for passive recreation only. Active recreation areas can be included on the open space portion, as long as it does not exceed 10% of the open space or three acres, whichever is less.

Most houses in Mendon are on two or more acres with the town requiring 60,000 SF of upland (1.38 acres) per house lot. These large lots and lawns create sprawl and destruction of wildlife habitats. Since Mendon needs to preserve land in an economical manner, the Open Space Communities can provide the protection of open space and recreational lands at almost no cost to the town. Since there has only been one of these subdivisions built, developers and residents need to be educated on the advantages of these types of subdivisions to encourage more of them.

One “unfriendly” Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permit development was approved and unfortunately a lot of time was wasted, as well as money, towards legal counsel, trying to get the developer to follow through with commitments. These developments allow the developers to bypass many of the town’s zoning regulations if they make 25% of the houses affordable. In the future the town needs to work harder towards providing the 10% affordable housing to avoid another “unfriendly” 40B Comprehensive Permit development.

Since this development, one positive move in this direction was to hire as Affordable Housing Coordinator (AHC) to work with various parties to create affordable housing to meet the needs of Mendon residents. The Land Use Committee needs to look at various smaller pieces of town-owned land that might not have as much environmental value and consider their sale for affordable housing. A proactive stance needs to continue in this area. The AHC needs to continue a public education process so residents understand that affordable housing can be attractive, help prevent sprawl and can work in consort with land preservation as well as improve the diversity and quality of life in Mendon.

Section 8 – Goals and Objectives

1. GOAL: To protect critical parcels of land for conservation and passive recreation

OBJECTIVES:

- 1a. Determine where land preservation should be targeted taking into consideration potential for greenway corridors (contiguous land parcels) and other areas that are scenic or environmentally sensitive
- 1b. Evaluate level of protection for each parcel and identify most critical areas for protection
- 1c. Permanently protect the parcels designated in 1a.
- 1d. Help to coordinate the exchange of information between town boards
- 1e. Investigate trail linkages to adjacent towns and trail potentials in Mendon, while considering the impact on the current trails in Mendon

1f. Educate the public on the environmental and financial benefits of open space

1g. Collect information from residents to understand their needs and interests

2. GOAL: To provide active recreation areas to meet the needs of Mendon's growing population

OBJECTIVES:

2a. Determine what current facilities need upgrading and what new facilities are needed

2b. Increase the number of fields and facilities and make an efficient use of recreational assets

2c. Work with the various athletic clubs to coordinate projects

2d. Provide funding sources for ADA upgrades on transition plan

3. GOAL: To access funding and land protection strategies to protect or purchase land for open space or recreation

OBJECTIVES:

3a. Investigate possibility for state matching funds

3b. Build-up the funds in the CPA Open Space and Budgeted Reserve Accounts

3c. Collect data on potential use of deed restrictions, easements and other creative and cost effective methods of land preservation

3d. Locate land that the town could possess for unpaid taxes

3e. Encourage the use of the Open Space Communities Bylaw and consider other bylaws to help with open space preservation and recreation facilities creation

4. GOAL: To maintain recreational and passive recreation properties the town owns

OBJECTIVES:

4a. Determine what the needs are at all the town open space parcels and recreational facilities

4b. Organize volunteer efforts to maintain these areas

5. GOAL: To protect the town's water resources (wetlands, ponds, aquifers etc.)

OBJECTIVES:

5a. Determine where Mendon's water resources are located

5b. Protect the areas where water is located

5c. Remove non-native and invasive plants from waterways and prevent road runoff, farm waste and other toxins from entering water ways or wetlands

6. GOAL: To provide support to farmers who want to keep their land in agriculture and maintain productive farms

OBJECTIVES:

- 6a. Determine the needs of area farmers through the Agricultural Commission
- 6b. Coordinate conservation efforts to provide land for agriculture
- 6c. Lease land to farmers and agriculture groups and work to balance these lands with wildlife habitats, such as nesting birds
- 6d. Support and promote local food efforts

7. GOAL: To help guide business and residential development to shape Mendon's growth, avoiding haphazard development

OBJECTIVES:

- 7a. Plan growth so that it works to maintain Mendon's rural character and country atmosphere
- 7b. Evaluating the areas in Mendon where the commercial development, open space and recreational facilities would be most ideally located in the town
- 7c. Look at zoning bylaw changes to encourage appropriate development in designated ideal locations

8. GOAL: To provide cemetery space to meet future needs

OBJECTIVES:

- 8a. Locate appropriate and available land that meshes with the overall goals of cost-effective land preservation
- 8b. Determine how to fund purchase of the land

9. GOAL: To assist in the acquisition of land for the Town of Mendon's needs

OBJECTIVES:

- 9a. Be aware of town land needs through communicating to town officials and town residents
- 9b. Locate properties that may be appropriate for town use and will enhance maintaining Mendon's rural character

10. To work towards the goal of 10% affordable housing units for the Town of Mendon

OBJECTIVES:

- 10a. Look for opportunities to promote more affordable housing
- 10b. Look for funding to promote affordable housing

Section 9 – Seven-Year Action Plan

Much of the action plans listed below are ongoing, overlap and vary in priority. The actions are listed in an organized format by goal. The high priority areas are labeled as such. However, land preservation can be very unpredictable. Often a town will not have a lot of notice before someone decides to sell their land. Even if town volunteers and town officials are in conversation with large landowners, people get sick or have to move and it cannot be predicted. The action plan below is a guideline to help the town be well prepared for land preservation and recreation projects, and maintenance of open space and recreational areas. Mendon accomplished numerous action steps from previous Open Space and Recreation Plans and many of these past “actions” are now labeled as ongoing, because they have been incorporated into the town committees’ work.

1. GOAL: To protect critical parcels of land for conservation and passive recreation

ACTIONS:

- 1a. Monitor land in Mendon through GIS mapping and map greenway corridors
Responsible Party: Land Use Committee **Potential Funding:** volunteers
YEARS: 2013-2020 Ongoing
- 1a. Maintain good communications with the Board of Assessors Office to be aware of land sales noting if land fits into greenway corridors or contains BioMap 2 Core Habitat or Critical Natural Landscape, especially Chapter 61, 61A & 61B properties
Responsible Party: Land Use Committee **Potential Funding:** volunteers
YEARS: 2013-2020 Ongoing
- 1b. Evaluate level of protection needed for each parcel, especially using the BioMap2, as well as other data on GIS maps
Responsible Party: Land Use Committee **Potential Funding:** volunteers
YEARS: 2013-2020 Ongoing
- 1c. When key parcels come up for sale try to purchase land or development rights, especially on land connecting to the Meadow Brook Woods property, the Town Forest, North Ave. area and the Inman Hill Wildlife Conservation Area
Responsible Party: Land Use and Community Preservation Committees
Potential Funding: MA DCS matching grants, Div. of Fish & Wildlife Grants, Federal Grants, non-profit land protection organization funding, private donations and CPA funds **YEARS: 2013-2020 High Priority**

- 1d. Have each of the Land Use Committee and the Community Preservation Committee members stay in close communication with the various committees they represent (Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Park Commissioners, Select Board etc.) **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee and Community Preservation Committee **Potential Funding:** volunteers
YEARS: 2013-2020 Ongoing
- 1e. Develop a trail system in Mendon (with well designated signage), following the greenways designated on the Action Plan map; work with neighboring towns, the Metacomet Land Trust and other groups (e.g. Bay State Trail Riders Association, the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission); **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee/BSTRA/BSA **Potential Funding:** volunteers /BSTRA/BSA Eagle Scout project fundraising/CPA Funds **YEARS: 2013-2020 High Priority**
- 1f. Educate residents to the importance of saving open space through a series of newspaper articles and meetings **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee, Community Preservation Committee, TTOR and the Lake Nipmuc Association **Potential Funding:** volunteers **YEARS: 2013-2020 Ongoing**
- 1f. Informally meet with large land owners letting them know the advantages of Chapter 61, 61A and 61B and other conservation techniques and write article on the topic **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee and Community Preservation Committee **Potential Funding:** LUC Budget/volunteers/CPA funds
YEARS: 2013-2020 Ongoing
- 1f. Update the goals, objectives and 7-year action plans for open space and recreation each year and present at the annual town meeting
Responsible Party: Land Use Committee & Town Forest Committee
Potential Funding: LUC Budget/volunteers **YEARS: 2016-2020 Annual**
- 1g. Encourage the public to attend Land Use Committee and Community Preservation Committee meetings. If appropriate, mail out a survey to all residents and town board members to reevaluate the current open space and recreation goals. Hold specific meetings on timely land preservation projects.
Responsible Party: Land Use Committee & Master Plan Committee
Potential Funding: LUC Budget/volunteers **YEAR: 2013-20 Ongoing**

2. GOAL: To provide active recreation areas to meet the needs of Mendon's growing population

ACTIONS:

- 2a. Continue to evaluate old facilities and determine needs, especially the tennis and basketball courts **Responsible Party:** Park Commissioners **Potential Funding:** Volunteers/CPA funds/Self-Help Grants **YEARS: 2013-2020 Ongoing and High Priority**
- 2b. Evaluate sites for potential sports fields, such as 161 Millville St. and the town owned 20 Milford St. **Responsible Party:** Park Commissioners **Potential Funding:** local businesses, CPA funds, PARC Grant and volunteers

YEARS: 2013-2013 *High Priority*

2c. Work with the Mendon-Upton Soccer Club and the Mendon Junior Baseball-Softball League **Responsible Party:** Park Commissioners **Potential Funding:** Volunteers **YEARS: 2013-2013 *Ongoing***

2d. Follow through with the ADA transition plan projects
Responsible Party: Park Commissioners/ ADA Coordinator **Potential Funding:** CPA funds **YEAR: 2013-15 *Ongoing***

3. GOAL: To access funding and land protection strategies to protect or purchase land for open space or recreation

ACTIONS:

3a. Review guidelines for the MA Dept. of Conservation and Recreation matching fund programs and other grant programs and where applicable apply for funds for appropriate open space or recreation projects. Work with TTOR, Metacomet Land Trust and other towns for regional projects.

Responsible Party: Land Use Committee and Park Commissioners

Potential Funding: volunteers, grants and CPA funds **YEARS: 2013-2020 *Ongoing and High Priority***

3b. Look at town-owned properties and evaluate the possibilities of making income on the properties benignly (forestry, farm lease, selling one small house lot on large property, renting out sports fields etc.) and then use the income for future purchase of open space

Responsible Party: Land Use Committee

Potential Funding: volunteers **YEARS: 2013-2020 *Ongoing***

3b. Evaluate use of the CPA Funds and publicize the CPA funded projects to promote continued voter support of the CPA tax levy **Responsible Party:** Community Preservation Committee **Potential Funding:** volunteers **YEARS: 2013-2020 *Ongoing***

3c. Work with Metacomet Land Trust, The Trustees of Reservations, area towns, Conservation Commission and other organizations to develop land protection strategies and promote regional projects **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee

Potential Funding: volunteers **YEARS: 2013-2020 *Ongoing***

3d. Follow through the process to obtain land for unpaid taxes for the Town

Responsible Party: Land Use Committee & Treasurer/Collector

Potential Funding: volunteers, CPA Funds **YEARS: 2013-2020 *Ongoing***

3e. Promote the use of the Open Space Communities Bylaw by working with the Planning Board and developers to make successful subdivisions so that others can see the value of building in this manner. Investigate it as a mandatory method of building subdivisions. **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee, Conservation Commission, Bylaw Committee and Planning Board **Funding**

Potential: volunteers **YEARS: 2013-2020 *Ongoing and High Priority***

- 3e. Investigate other bylaws to protect land, such as an Upper Elevation Bylaw to protect scenic vistas. **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee, Conservation Commission, Bylaw Committee and Planning Board **Funding Potential:** Volunteers **YEARS: 2013-2020 Ongoing**

4. GOAL: To maintain recreational and passive recreation properties the town owns

ACTIONS:

- 4a. Have the Park Commissioner put in priority order the repairs and improvements that need to be made and follow through with the projects. **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee and Conservation Commission **Funding Potential:** Volunteers, CPA & grants **YEARS: 2013-2020 High Priority**
- 4a. Have the Trustees of Reservations, Metacomet Land Trust, MA Fisheries and Wildlife and the Boy Scouts determine (on the properties that they are monitoring) what the maintenance needs are on the trails (including signage), if there are invasive weeds that need to be removed from waterways or the land, and other improvements that would enhance the open space for wildlife habitat and passive recreation. **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee and Conservation Commission **Funding Potential:** Volunteers, CPA & grants **YEARS: 2013-2020 Ongoing and High Priority**
- 4b. Work with the Park Commissioners and groups mentioned in 4a to coordinate volunteer efforts and write grants. **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee, Community Preservation Committee **Funding Potential:** Volunteers, CPA and grants **YEARS: 2013-2020 Ongoing**
- 4b. Encourage more volunteering with new groups, such as the Girl Scouts and the High School Honor Society **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee, Community Preservation Committee **Funding Potential:** Volunteers, CPA and grants **YEARS: 2013-2020 Ongoing**

5. GOAL: To protect the town's water resources (wetlands, ponds, aquifers etc.)

ACTIONS:

- 5a. Work with Select Board and Planning Board to evaluate the Groundwater Protection District Bylaw. **Responsible Party:** Select Board, Bylaw Committee, Board of Water Commissioners and Board of Health **Potential Funding:** volunteers **YEAR: 2013-2016 High Priority**
- 5b. Protect land parcels that are watershed areas or environmentally sensitive with regards to water protection **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee, Conservation Commission and the Lake Nipmuc Association **Potential Funding:** CPA funds, bonds and grants **YEARS: 2013-2020 Ongoing and High Priority**

- 5c. Continue to remove the water chestnuts that had infested nine acre Inman Pond located on the Meadow Brook Woods Property that was purchased with a MA LAND Grant and CPA funds

Responsible Party: Community Preservation Committee

Potential Funding: The Trustees of Reservations and CPA funds

YEAR: 2013-2013 *High Priority*

- 5c. Organize a volunteer crew to hand pick the Inman Pond of invasive, non-native water chestnuts each year to check the weed in check.

Responsible Party: Community Preservation Committee

Potential Funding: The Trustees of Reservations and CPA funds

YEAR: 2013-2020 *Ongoing and High Priority*

- 5c. Monitor Lake Nipmuc for invasive weeds such as water chestnuts and purple loosestrife. **Responsible Party:** Lake Nipmuc Association

Potential Funding: Volunteers, Lake Nipmuc Association and CPA funds

YEAR: 2013-2020 *Ongoing and High Priority*

6. GOAL: To provide support to farmers who want to keep their land in agriculture and maintain productive farms

ACTIONS:

- 6a. Talk with area farmers to determine their needs **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee and Agricultural Commission **Potential Funding:** volunteers

YEARS: 2013-2020 *Ongoing and High Priority*

- 6b. Investigate state and federal programs that may help area farmers

Responsible Party: Land Use Committee and Agricultural Commission

Potential Funding: Volunteers and state and federal agricultural programs

YEARS: 2013-2020 *Ongoing*

- 6b. Work with farmers to put conservation restrictions on their land **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee **Potential Funding:** volunteers

YEARS: 2013-2020 *Ongoing and High Priority*

- 6c. Work with area farmers and 4-H groups to utilize open farm fields for crops or livestock in coordination with preserving wildlife habitat, especially for nesting birds **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee and Agricultural Commission **Potential Funding:** Volunteers and state, federal agricultural programs and CPA Funds **YEARS: 2013-2020 *Ongoing and High Priority***

- 6d. Look for options to sell local produce and products at a farmer's market or support a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) farm to provide fresh local food to Mendon residents and support the efforts of local farmers. **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee and Agricultural Commission **Potential Funding:** Volunteers, CPA funding and grants **YEARS: 2012-2020 *High Priority***

7. GOAL: To help guide business and residential development to shape Mendon's growth, avoiding haphazard development

ACTIONS:

- 7a. Select Board sell or lease the 32-acre town-owned property at 36 Milford Street that is zoned for commercial and large-scale ground-mounted solar PV systems, keeping in mind the use should fit with Mendon's rural character and generate income to repay the debt incurred to purchase or lease the Fino property **Responsible Party:** Select Board and Planning Board **Potential Funding:** Volunteers and funds from sale of property for commercial use **YEARS: 2013-2013**
High Priority
- 7a. Look actively for future possibilities to provide open space and income to the town through land purchases **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee and Select Board **Potential Funding:** Volunteers **YEARS: 2013-2018** **Ongoing and High Priority**
- 7b. Planning Board and Bylaw Committee analyze and suggest changes to the zoning districts in Mendon **Responsible Party:** Planning Board and Bylaw Committee **Potential Funding:** Volunteers **YEARS: 2013-2013** **High Priority**
- 7c. Monitor use of the Demolition Delay Bylaw **Responsible Party:** Historical Commission and Preservation Mendon **Potential Funding:** Volunteers and CPA funds **YEARS: 2013-2020** **Ongoing and High Priority**
- 7c. Consider a form of a Historic Downtown Village to preserve the downtown and make it more pedestrian friendly **Responsible Party:** Historical Commission, Historical Society, Preservation Mendon and Bylaw Committee **Potential Funding:** Volunteers, grants and CPA funds **YEARS: 2013-2020**
Ongoing and High Priority

8. GOAL: To provide cemetery space to meet future needs

ACTIONS:

- 8a. Work with the Cemetery Commissioners to locate property appropriate for cemetery space **Responsible Party:** Select Board **Potential Funding:** Volunteers **YEAR: 2013-2020** **Ongoing**
- 8a. Finalize the location of cemetery space and make appropriate arrangements to make the space accessible **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee and Select Board **Potential Funding:** Volunteers, grant or bonds **YEAR: 2013-2020** **Ongoing**
- 8a. Evaluate using a portion of the land for a memorial garden for cremated remains providing an alternative to burial and therefore preserving land **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee and Cemetery Commissioners **Potential Funding:** Volunteers **YEAR: 2013-2020** **Ongoing**
- 8b. Encouraging the Cemetery Commissioners to investigate funding sources, donation possibilities, matching funds and other methods of purchase to keep the costs to a minimum **Responsible Party:** Cemetery Commissioners and Select Board **Potential Funding:** Volunteers **YEAR: 2013-2020** **Ongoing**

9. GOAL: To assist in the acquisition of land for the Town of Mendon's needs

ACTIONS:

- 9a. Communicate with the Select Board to be up-to-date on the land use needs for the town **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee **Potential Funding:** Volunteers, grants, bonds and CPA Funds **YEARS: 2013-2020 Ongoing**
- 9b. Assist where needed to locate land to fill the needs of the Town of Mendon, (e.g. school buildings, fire station, new town hall, library, affordable housing, post office etc.), balancing these needs with maintaining Mendon's rural character and preserving open space designated as a high priority **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee and Select Board **Potential Funding:** Volunteers **YEARS: 2013-2020 Ongoing**

10. To work towards the goal of 10% affordable housing units for the Town of Mendon

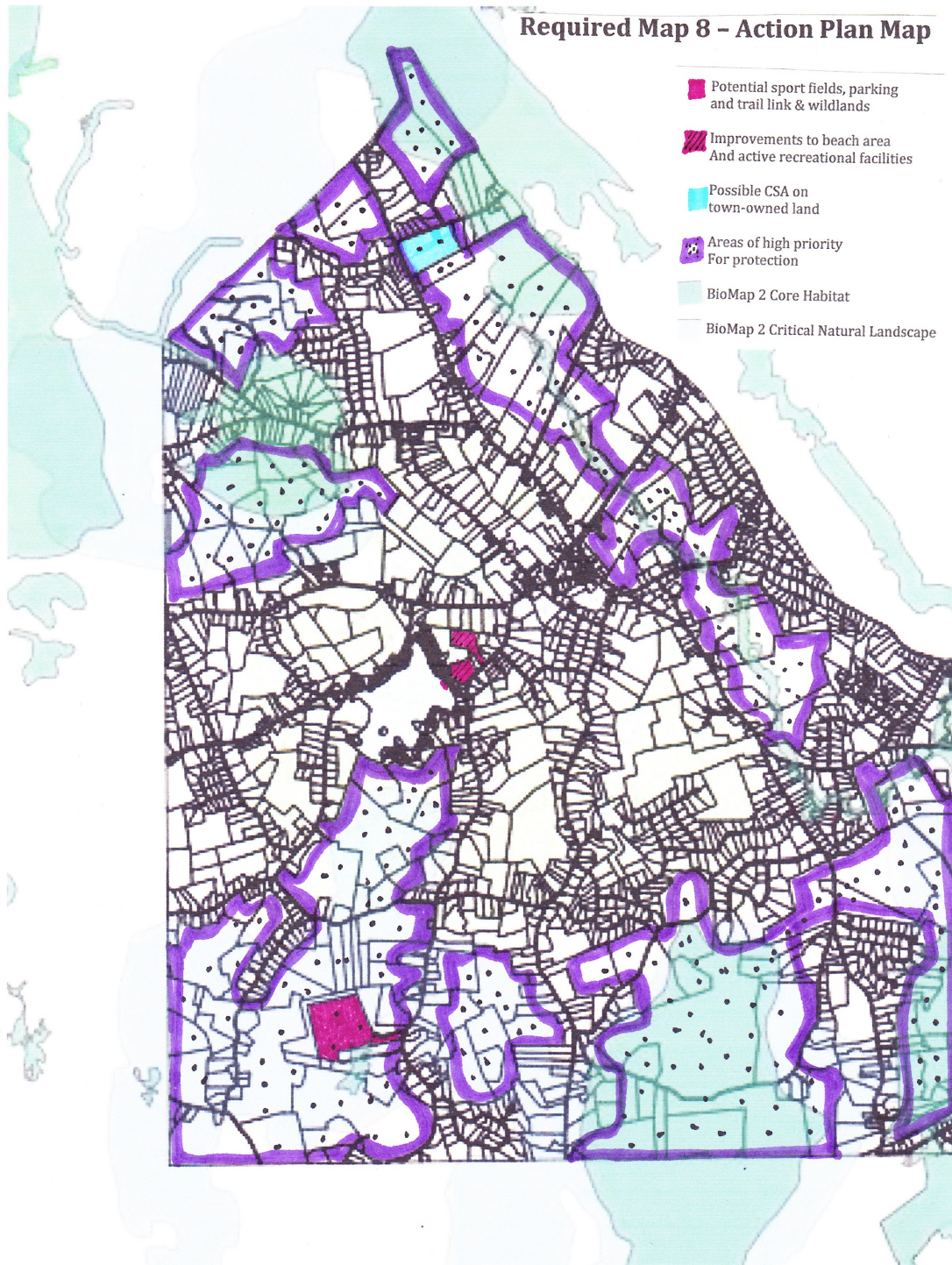
ACTIONS:

- 10a. When land comes up for sale evaluate the potential for affordable housing **Responsible Party:** Land Use Committee, Affordable Housing Coordinator and Mendon Housing Authority **Potential Funding:** Volunteers, grants and CPA funds **YEARS: 2013-2020 Ongoing**
- 10a. Assist in review and possible revisions and additions to Zoning Bylaws to encourage and permit development of housing that promotes Open Space, Recreation, and Affordable Housing goals and enhances properties values in Mendon by preserving the Town's natural resources and traditional character. **Responsible Party:** Affordable Housing Coordinator, Select Board and Bylaw Committee **Potential Funding:** Volunteers **YEARS: 2013-2020 Ongoing**
- 10a. Use Master Plan writing project as an opportunity to engage community in discussions to identify immediate housing needs and define future the future of housing development within the Town. **Responsible Party:** Affordable Housing Coordinator **Potential Funding:** Volunteers **YEARS: 2013-2013 Ongoing and High Priority**
- 10b. Create home-buyer assistance subsidy program to efficiently use CPA funds to increase the number of affordable homes with minimal economic risk for the Town. **Responsible Party:** Affordable Housing Coordinator **Potential Funding:** Volunteers and CPA funds **YEARS: 2013-2020 Ongoing**
- 10b. Identify opportunities for cost effective housing projects, such as use of town-owned land or tax-taken properties for affordable housing. **Responsible Party:** Affordable Housing Coordinator and Assessor's Office **Potential Funding:** Volunteers and CPA funds **YEARS: 2013-2020**

Ongoing and High Priority

- 10b. Maintain the CPA tax levy program and find projects to make the best use of the CPA affordable housing fund **Responsible Party:** Affordable Housing Coordinator and Community Preservation Committee **Potential Funding:** Volunteers, grants and CPA funds **YEARS: 2013-2020**
Ongoing
- 10b. Look for grants and matching fund programs to encourage affordable housing **Responsible Party:** Affordable Housing Coordinator
Potential Funding: Volunteers and CPA funds **YEARS: 2013-2020**
Ongoing
- 10b. Tie in affordable housing projects with other land acquisition programs for open space preservation or business development **Responsible Party:** Affordable Housing Coordinator **Potential Funding:** Volunteers, grants and CPA funds **YEARS: 2013-2020** ***Ongoing***

Required Map 8 – Action Plan Map



Section 10 – Public Comments

Letters Appendix C

See Paper copy of the OSRP at the Mendon Town Clerk's Office to see the letters.

Section 11 – References

1. The Open Space Planner's Workbook and Requirements
<http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/eea/dcs/osplanreq08.pdf>
<http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/eea/dcs/osrp-workbook08.pdf>
2. MassGIS
3. Central MA Regional Planning Commission
4. *Blackstone Valley Prioritization Project Report*
5. *Master Plan Survey*
6. Town of Mendon committees and employees mentioned in Section 2B. Planning Process and Public Participation
7. Executive Office and Energy and Environmental Affairs
8. Department of Conservation and Recreation
9. MA Natural Heritage and Endanger Species Program
10. MA SCORP Report
11. MA Audubon report, *Losing Ground: At What Cost*
12. 2010 and 2010 Census Reports
13. Mendon, MA 1667 – 1967, Mother of Municipalities, by Peter Hackett
14. Mendon's Master Plan Survey

Appendix A



Mendon Master Plan Survey #1 – Results Summary

Original: 30 Sept. 2011

Last updated: 24 Oct. 2011

2163 survey's mailed out on July 21, 2011

731 returns as of 30 September (34%), good spread of respondents as shown below:

How long have you lived in town?		What is your age range?	
1-5	69	18-40	83
6-10	112	41-64	477
11-25	247	65+	141
25+	236		
Total:	664	Total:	701

Hot topics from the survey:

Category	Number of Comments
Taxes	112
Traffic	102
School situation	94
Town management	70
Services	63
Commercial development	52
Car dealership	41
Overrides	20
Budget	15
Strip club	11

Section 1: Early analysis:

Question 1:

Please share your thoughts regarding growth in Mendon:

Row Labels	Count of 1A	
1	247	Too fast 36%
2	72	Too slow 10%
		About Right
3	347	49%
6	47	DK
(blank)		
Grand Total	713	

Notes:

- 156 comments made

Question 2:

Please indicate your level of concern with regard to growth in Mendon:

	Increase in school enrollment	Increase in Traffic	Size/scale of commercial development	
Growth				
Row Labels	Count of 2A	Count of 2B	Count of 2C	
1	56	56	55	Not at all concerned
2	150	147	150	Not very concerned
3	222	218	219	Somewhat concerned

4	263	260	257	Very concerned
6	25	25	25	DK
(blank)		7	6	
Grand Total	716	713	712	

Notes:

- 210 comments made

Question 3:

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the following:								
Values								
Row Labels	Expanding commercial opportunities	Protecting the towns natural resources	Providing necessary infrastructure	Providing police services	Providing fire services	Providing library services	Providing recreation	Providing social opportunities
1	71	71	69	71	70	43	71	68
2	213	212	212	211	212	140	212	211
3	210	206	208	209	209	138	209	204
4	130	130	129	130	130	100	130	129
6	73	71	72	72	73	48	73	72
(blank)		23	23	24	25	12	24	23
Grand Total	697	713	713	717	719	481	719	707

Notes:

- 211 comments made

Question 4:

Please tell us how you feel about the following types of development that could occur within Mendon:											
Values											
Row Labels	Count of 4A	Count of 4B	Count of 4C	Count of 4D	Count of 4E	Count of 4F	Count of 4G	Count of 4H	Count of 4I	Count of 4J	Count of 4K
1	380	359	362	374	374	372	372	369	370	377	376
2	125	125	123	124	123	124	124	125	125	125	125
3	120	120	118	118	120	120	120	120	119	120	119
4	40	39	39	40	40	40	40	39	40	40	40
5	29	28	28	27	28	28	28	28	29	29	28
6	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	15	16	16
(blank)		6	5	11	11	10	11	12	10	12	10
Grand Total	710	693	691	710	712	710	711	709	708	719	714
a. Low density residential-1 ½ acre or larger lots											
b. Medium density residential-1 acre or larger lots											
c. High density residential- 1/2 acre or larger lots											
d. Mixed use-residential and commercial that is on same lot											
e. Commercial retail											
f. Commercial office											
g. Single family residences											
h. Apartments											
i. Condominiums & townhouses											
j. Age restricted housing-that is for adults 55 years and older											
k. Affordable housing-that is affordable to a family earning 80% of the area median income											

Notes:

- 142 comments made

Question 5:

In order to support future development, municipal water and sewer, resources may be needed. Should the town:

Row Labels	Count of 5	
1	105	Install water and sewer lines now to encourage future development?
2	249	Partner with developers and install public water and sewer lines if and when a development p is approved?
3	260	The town should not install water and sewer lines at all.
4	80	Don't know.
(blank)		
Grand Total	694	

Notes:

- 189 comments made

Question 6:

Please indicate if you favor or oppose the following activities in Mendon:

Row Labels	Values				
	a. Improving schools	b. Purchase open space for conservation	c. Build community center	d. Improve/expand town center	
1	170	169	166	165	Oppose, not needed
2	290	289	287	284	Favor, but not for higher taxes
3	241	239	237	235	Favor even if higher taxes
6	14	14	14	14	DK
(blank)		3	2	2	
Grand Total	715	714	706	700	

Notes:

- 138 comments made

Question 7:

What do you like most about living in Mendon?

Every answer is different but mostly centered around the following:

- Rural setting
- Nice people
- Small town
- Historic, scenic
- Open space
- Location
- Quiet and peaceful

Notes:

- 580 comments!

Question 8:

What do you like least about living in Mendon?

	Category	Count	Comments
1	Taxes	112	Too high, rising too fast...majority 41-64 years old
2	Traffic	102	Mainly high traffic, noise and safety related
3	School situation	94	Mainly due to argument over budget
4	Town management	70	Politics, leadership, organization, communication
5	Services	63	For and against various services
6	Commercial development	52	Mostly requesting more development
7	Car dealership	41	Complaints about lights, overdevelopment, etc..
8	Overrides	20	Too many overrides, no means no, etc..
9	Budget	15	Not being managed properly, etc..
10	Strip club	11	Against having one

Notes:

- 577 comments!

Question 10:

How long have you lived in town?

Row Labels	Count of 10
11-25	247
1-5	69
25+	236
6-10	112
(blank)	
Grand Total	664

Question 11:

What is your age range?

Row Labels	Count of 11
18-40	83
41-64	477
65+	141
(blank)	
Grand Total	701

Question 12,13:

Row Labels	Do you have school age children?	Are they in Mendon school system?
No	425	110
Yes	275	269
(blank)		
Grand Total	700	379

Appendix B



TOWN OF MENDON, MASSACHUSETTS

ADA SELF-EVALUATION AND TRANSITION PLAN

Updated June, 2013

The Town of Mendon's original Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan was completed in 1993. This update supersedes and replaces that older plan.

This 2013 ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan consists of the following sections:

- **Self Evaluation:** A self-evaluation of all town-owned buildings
- **Transition Plan:**
 - A list of all facilities that need improvement and a suggested timeline for compliance with the ADA (based on the priorities listed in the *Checklist for Existing Facilities* [version 2.1 – © revised August, 1995] from Adaptive Environments Center, Inc. for the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, as provided by the Massachusetts Office on Disability)
 - A suggested training plan for municipal employees
 - Handicapped- accessible transportation
- **Grievance Plan:** A suggested grievance plan for handling and resolving complaints regarding the ADA compliance of municipal buildings and programs (Pages 18)

The ADA Coordinator is grateful for the assistance and guidance provided by the Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD) and the Town of Milford, MA Commission on Disability to enable the preparation of this plan.

Prepared By:
Kevin Rudden
ADA Coordinator

Self-Evaluation

To prepare this ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan, the Town's ADA Coordinator inspected each town-owned facility for compliance during 2012, based on the priorities listed in the *Checklist for Existing Facilities* (version 2.1 – © revised August, 1995) from Adaptive Environments Center, Inc. for the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, as provided by the Massachusetts Office on Disability.

A copy of the *Checklist for Existing Facilities* is included in the Appendix (**pages 19-27**) to this report.

The ADA Coordinator presented his findings to the Board of Selectmen in June, 2012 – after his own inspections – and was asked to work with the Town's Finance Committee to both determine the costs of needed remediation and to prioritize needed remediation across various fiscal years.

As a result of discussions between the ADA Coordinator and the Finance Committee, and then with the Town's Community Preservation Committee, Town Meeting agreed in late 2012 to hire Kessler, McGuiness & Associates, LLC of Newton, MA at a cost of up to \$8,000 to both verify the Town's ADA Coordinator's findings and to project the costs for needed remediation. A total of \$6,845.72 was expended in this effort.

Following receipt of Kessler, McGuiness & Associates' report* in early 2013, the ADA Coordinator discussed the findings in various meetings with the Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee, Community Preservation Committee, Board of Park Commissioners and Capital Expenditures Committee. From these meetings, it was agreed that the Community Preservation Committee would support expenditures falling under applicable categories for Community Preservation Act funding (i.e., historical preservation and open space and recreation) and other town funds would be sought for the remaining remediation.

* A copy of the Kessler, McGuiness & Associates report is available from the ADA Coordinator upon request.

Open Space and Recreational Facilities

To date, the Town of Mendon has not conducted a systematic re-evaluation of its Open Space and Recreational facilities for compliance with the ADA beyond those falling under the jurisdiction of the Board of Park Commissioners.

The remaining facilities (i.e., those not re-evaluated) are open space parcels consisting of wooded lands and fields. The conundrum in making such areas ADA-complaint is that any remediation may destroy the very reason why these lands were acquired: namely, to preserve them in their natural state.

As a compromise between creating fully ADA-compliant trails and leaving them in their natural state, the ADA Coordinator is in the process of walking all historical trails (e.g., cart paths) and recently created trails for horses and pedestrians on these lands to ensure that any such trails which pose difficulties are clearly delineated by signage and that handicapped-accessible trails are also so delineated by signage.

In addition, the ADA Coordinator is working with the appropriate town boards and commissions (i.e., Land Use Committee, Community Preservation Committee and Conservation Commission) to ensure that trails created in the future try to avoid any sharp turns and slopes that would make them difficult to navigate.

Town of Mendon – Municipal Buildings					
	Building	Street Address	Square Footage	Year Constructed	Date Inspected
	Memorial Field – Bathrooms & Portable Classroom	Taft Avenue			6/6/12
	Town Beach	Taft Avenue	14,804	1935	6/6/12

***Note:** “Square Footage” and “Date Constructed” data from Town of Mendon, MA Board of Assessors’ records.*

Mendon-Upton Regional School District – School Buildings	
Building	Address
H.P. Clough Elementary School	10 North Avenue
Miscoe Hill Middle School	148 North Avenue

Note: School buildings fall under the jurisdiction of the Mendon-Upton Regional School District. ADA-related issues should be addressed to the Superintendent's Office: 150 North Avenue, Mendon, MA 01756. Telephone: 508-634-1585.

Priority 1: Accessible Approach and Entrance	
Building	Comments
Memorial Field – Bathrooms	The entrances to the bathroom facility are completely accessible, however the location is reached via dirt/bark mulch covered pathways – as opposed to impervious surfaces – which makes handicapped accessibility to the building extremely difficult.
Memorial Field – Portable Classroom	The front entrance access to this building is not handicapped accessible. The rear doorway exit also is not accessible, but could be via construction of a ramp and creating an impervious path between the access driveway and the ramp.

Town Beach	The entrances to the “office” building at the Town Beach are not handicapped accessible. The front entrance can be made accessible with the installation of an automatic door opener and proper entry handles. The rear entrance will need proper entry handles, a ramp and an impervious pathway to be installed. The current designated handicapped parking spaces in the parking lot for the Town Beach are not the correct size.
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Priority 2: Access to Goods and Services	
Building	Comments
Memorial Field – Portable Classroom	Because the entrances to this building is not handicapped accessible, any programs held in it should be relocated to another town facility.

Priority 3: Access to Rest Rooms	
Building	Comments
Memorial Field – Bathrooms	The entrances to the bathroom facility are completely accessible, however the location is reached via dirt/bark mulch covered pathways – as opposed to impervious surfaces – which make reaching the building extremely difficult. To correct this, impervious paving should be used to approach the building.

Town Beach	There are three bathroom facilities at the buildings located at this facility. The one inside the main building needs to be upgraded to comply with ADA regulations, and signs need to be posted on the outside of this building and on the restroom doors of the adjacent building directing patrons to the accessible bathroom.
------------	---

Transition Plan

The following Transition Plan is based upon:

- The items identified as needing to be corrected, in order of Priority #1-4;
- The amount of use of each town facility – that is, the buildings/facilities used the most have the highest priority for improvements and, correspondingly, the buildings/facilities with the least public use have the lowest priority for improvements; and,
- A recognition of the town's financial constraints by recommending a multi-year course of action.

➤ Priority 1: Accessible Approach and Entrance

Building	Timetable for Correction
Memorial Field – Portable Classroom	Obtain cost estimates in Fiscal Year 2013
Town Beach	Obtain cost estimates in Fiscal Year 2013
Memorial Field – Portable Classroom	Correct in Fiscal Year 2013
Town Beach	Correct in Fiscal Year 2015

➤ Priority 2: Access to Goods and Services

Building	Timetable for Correction
Memorial Field – Portable Classroom	Obtain cost estimates in Fiscal Year 2013
Town Beach	Obtain cost estimates in Fiscal Year 2013

Town Beach	Correct in Fiscal Year 2015
Memorial Field – Portable Classroom	Correct in Fiscal Year 2013

➤ **Priority 3: Access to Rest Rooms**

Building	Timetable for Correction
Memorial Field – Bathrooms	Obtain cost estimates in Fiscal Year 2013
Memorial Field – Bathrooms	Correct in Fiscal Year 2013
Town Beach	Obtain Cost Estimates in Fiscal Year 2013
Town Beach	Correct in Fiscal Year 2015

Summary of Recommendations by Fiscal Year

***Note:** The Town of Mendon Fiscal Year runs from July 1st through June 30th. Fiscal Year 2013 covers the period from July 1, 20-12 through June 30, 2013.*

Timetable for Correction	Building
Fiscal Year 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct Memorial Field – Portable Classroom: Priority #1 • Correct Memorial Field – Portable Classroom: Priority #2
Fiscal Year 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct Town Beach: Priority #1

Timetable for Correction	Building
Fiscal Year 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct Colonial Drive Soccer Field

Suggested Training Plan for all Municipal Employees

[NOTE: the term “employees” in this context refers to all full-time and part-time employees receiving salaries and/or wages as well as elected and appointed board and committee members]

Recommendation #1: It is unknown if any of the Town of Mendon’s employees (other than the Highway Surveyor and the ADA Coordinator) have received any type of training regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Just as employees periodically receive training from the Massachusetts Ethics Commission, it is highly recommended that the Board of Selectmen ask the Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD) to conduct periodic training sessions to give employees an overview of what the ADA is and what the regulations associated with this entail.

This training should prevent ADA-accessibility and/or discrimination problems from occurring.

For example, when Founder’s Park was “renovated,” it should have been made handicapped accessible. This, in turn, would have facilitated easier handicapped accessibility to the adjacent Historical Museum.

Recommendation #2: Given the non-compliance issues with the recently renovated Mendon Fire Headquarters Building and with the new Police Station under construction, it is recommended that all Building Department officials receive in-depth training regarding the federal and state building code regulations associated with the ADA.

Recommendation #3: Given that the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Review conduct reviews and approve special permits for commercial development in town, it is

recommended that their members also receive in-depth training regarding the federal and state building code regulations associated with the ADA.

Handicapped-Accessible Transportation

Accessible public transportation for disabled residents is provided by the Mendon Senior Center van, subject to the funding available to operate the van.

These trips may be scheduled by contacting the Mendon Senior Center at 508-478-6175.

TOWN OF MENDON, MASSACHUSETTS AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Section 1: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Town of Mendon may not discriminate on the basis of disability against any qualified individual with a disability (QID) in the services, programs or activities it provides, in accessibility to public meetings and in its employment practices.

Section 2: In the event that a (QID) believes he/she has been discriminated against, a complaint may be filed, using the following format:

1. Complaint shall be in writing, signed by the Complainant or an authorized representative.
2. Complainant shall include Complainant's name, address and telephone, or alternative method of contact.
3. Complaint shall identify the Town Department, employee, officer or agency committing the alleged discriminatory action.
4. Complaint shall describe, in detail, the alleged discriminatory action.

Section 3: The Complaint shall be submitted, within thirty (30) days of the alleged discriminatory action, or knowledge thereof, to the appropriate ADA Coordinator:

Town of Mendon – Board of Selectmen’s Office
Attn: ADA Coordinator
20 Main Street
Mendon, MA 01756

Section 4: The designated Coordinator shall investigate the Complaint and meet with the appropriate board, official or employee(s), to resolve the Complaint. Within seven (7) days after such meeting, the Coordinator shall inform the complainant of the resolution.

Section 5: Nothing in this Grievance Procedure shall preclude the Complainant from filing a complaint with: any appropriate state or federal agencies, or by the filing of a lawsuit in Federal Court.



TOWN OF MENDON

ADA Coordinator

20 Main Street
Mendon, Massachusetts 01756

Telephone: 508-478-3124
krudden@mendonma.gov

TO: Anne Mazar, Chair
Mendon Land Use Committee
Mendon Community Preservation Committee

FROM: Kevin Rudden, ADA Coordinator

SUBJECT: ADA Inventory of Open Space Areas

DATE: December 31, 2013

Per your recent request, I have conducted an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) “facility inventory” for each of the following properties:

- Inman Hill Wildlife Conservation Area
- Meadow Brook Woods
- Mendon Town Forest

Copies of these inventories are below.

It is very important to note that nearly every category on the inventory forms does not apply to these three properties because they are open space parcels consisting of wooded lands and fields in their “natural state.”

INVENTORIES

The Town of Mendon has not had any scheduled plans to make these areas ADA-complaint because to do so would destroy the very reason why these lands were acquired: namely, to preserve them in their natural state. In addition, after thoroughly researching the issue, I can find no clear state or national standards for creating fully ADA-compliant pedestrian or equine trails.

However, as part of my inventory, I walked all existing trails (e.g., cart paths) and those created by volunteers for pedestrians and horses after the town’s acquisition of these properties so as to ascertain personally – as a disabled individual – what types of difficulties they present to handicapped persons.

From this personal inspection, there are improvements that could be made that would keep these properties in as “natural” a state as possible and yet allow handicapped individuals to enjoy them. These recommended improvements are:

Inman Hill Wildlife Conservation Area:

- Creation of a permeable paved parking area at the end of Inman Hill Road to allow access to the open field located diagonally across from where the large metal storage facility is located.
- Creation of a compacted stone dust walkway from this new parking area into the field.

Meadow Brook Woods:

- Creation of a permeable paved area off the Asylum Street entrance.
- Creation of a compacted stone dust walkway from this new parking area to the small stream that crosses the property a few hundred feet away

I plan to bring these recommendations to the Community Preservation Committee to discuss possible funding sources.



Kevin Rudden
ADA Coordinator